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The Kannada Stage—Then and Now

Adya Rangacharya

The play is called *Keechaka Vadha*; it depicts a famous episode from the epic *Mahabharata*. The hero of the play, Pandava Bheemsena, is living *incognito*, as a cook, in King Virata's palace. When he first appears on the stage, he is supposed to sit alone, bemoaning his fate. Today the curtain rolls up, but the stage is empty. A child of eight or nine is squatting on a carpet which has more dust on it than the ground on which it is spread. He is in the first 'row'. He is impatient, besieged by curiosity, and moves nearer to the platform. He is craning his neck to peep into the wing on his right. There is Bheemsena with his mace on his shoulder and he is in simple clothes, the garb of a cook. Why doesn't he come on the stage? The harmonium suggests the notes of a song; still he does not come! On the other hand, he is gesticulating angrily, gnashing his teeth in silence. The hurried movements of his lips are conveying something to the people in the opposite wing. In a minute or two, a stage-hand enters with a stool two feet high; he places it in the centre of the stage and slips out. Now the pace of the harmonium is brisker; and in walks Bheemsena. He sits on the stool, clears his throat, and picks up the strain of the song from the harmonium. The play begins. The eight-year old watching the scene is happy and so are hundreds of men and women, sitting all round the platform on the uncarpeted ground. That was the first play I saw in my village sixty years ago. Why did a cook carry a mace? Why did he insist on a stool being placed for him to sit on? Why did he sing? Nobody asked any questions; nobody bothered. Even today, re-living the atmosphere of the time, I am more amused than critical.

This was a play which we witnessed with a degree of awe and respect because it brought us something of 'urban culture', namely drop-curtains. Even before that I had seen a play called an *Aata* to distinguish it from *Keechaka Vadha*, a *Nataka*. It, too, had a mythological theme. But what an eyeful! Both kings and gods had crowns on their heads, arm-plates on both arms (from shoulder to elbow), all glittering in various colours (of paper), and a basketful of necklaces and golden ornaments (mostly genuine and lent by the leading families of the village). The actors strutted bare-foot on the stage. The audience sat in the moonlight, while the characters on the stage remained bathed in the soft, yet adequate light of oil-lamps and torches. When a god or a demon appeared, *raai* powder was freely sprinkled on the torches and for a second there was a flare of dazzling brilliance. Nobody entered from the wings; the stage was open on all three sides. The *deus ex machina* entered at the fag end of the play in a torch-light procession, starting from a place almost a furlong away; he passed through the rows of spectators and with a high jump climbed up the platform. For all practical purposes, the audience would make a 180° turn, make way for a character, comment on the procession and criticise or praise the high jump and its record-breaking aspect, comparing it to earlier performances. While this was taking place, the characters on the stage would all remain silent; they would be busy witnessing the spectacle. This was the occasion when the children who had dropped off to sleep were rudely prodded to wakefulness.



Gubbi Veeranna.

During the span of these sixty years, I have retained my interest in the theatre and actively participated in theatre activities. I have been intimately associated with the stage both in and outside Karnatak. Whenever I remember those earlier experiences, I am filled with a deep admiration both for the stage and the audience of those days. Everything about them was honest and sincere. When all is said and done, the stage is make-believe. So why should one try and deceive oneself by saying that actual life is represented on the stage? Bheemasena (that is the actor) is comfortable singing a song only when he is seated. So he waits for the stool. We saw nothing wrong in that. It was his singing, his playing the part that seemed relevant to us and not whether he should or should not wait for a stool. When the Divine Arbiter, the *deus ex machina*, enters, it is the fact of his being the Superhuman and Final Arbiter that is sought to be impressed on the audience. So we forget that he is the village-carpenter; we make way for him, enabling him to leap on to the stage. And why do we go to see a play? Not to learn the lesson that God punishes the wicked and rewards the good. We have heard these stories from our grandmothers, from our teachers, and from our *Pauraanikas* and *Keertankars*. We go to the theatre to see and to enjoy the performance. And in those days the audience enjoyed all that could be enjoyed, turning a blind eye to everything else. Each of us picked up only what was relevant to his or her enjoyment. The children enjoyed the spectacle, the flash of the torches, the sound accompanying the procession, or the mace-fight between the cook Bheemasena and the villain Keechaka. How we roared with triumph when the villain fell down and 'died'! Our more knowledgeable elders enjoyed either the singing or the acting; the women, as a rule, worshipped with folded hands the 'gods' and cheerfully wept (though moved by sorrow) when the hero and heroine were persecuted by the villain. The tougher elements in the audience and the village urchins enjoyed the ribaldry in the show and the repartees with the *Sutradhara* (called *goddi* in my part of Karnataka). The women belonging to the village aristocracy watched with pride the glitter of the *saris* and the golden ornaments which they had lent to the performers. And, above all, it was an event which the village awaited with expectation for weeks on end and the villagers were determined not to be disappointed.

There is one thing, in particular, which I remember with relish even today. It is something which I have to check myself from carrying into effect. I mentioned earlier on that I was seated in the first 'row'. It would be wrong to believe that this was my seat for the performance. I was there only when the incident (of Bheemasena's stool) took place. As a matter of fact, not only we, the children, but even the grown-ups would, as a rule, freely change their 'seats' during a performance. I had my own 'family box' on the shoulders of my grandfather. He was a jovial old soul, and he kept on moving round the entire periphery of the 'auditorium'. I realized how such movement formed an essential part of our enjoyment of the play and particularly so later on when I shifted to Bijapur as a high school student or when I stayed in Poona during my college days. The very first time I entered an urban theatre I was thoroughly uncomfortable; I felt suffocated. Even today I prefer to move about in a theatre and I confess that I do so on the slightest pretext.

I gained yet another experience in Bijapur when I witnessed (in complete ignorance of the language) my first Marathi play. The play was

advertised as written by such and such author. Till now I had believed that a play was made up by the actors. I knew that the stories had emerged from mythologies and that no modern 'mister' had written them. The novelty, however, wore off when I gradually found that the same was true about Kannada plays.

In the years following the First World War more Marathi than Kannada plays used to be staged in my part of Karnatak. The only exceptions to this rule were half a dozen plays (perhaps not even as many) like *Shri Krishna Leela*, or *Lankaadahana* or *Shani Prabhava*. The authors of these plays were hardly known beyond the title page—and that too, only when the play was printed. On the other hand, the Marathi dramatists seemed to have been known, even independently of their plays. It was, therefore, not surprising that the Kannada plays were modelled upon, if not actually translated from Marathi plays like *Rakshasi Mahatwakaanksha*, *Veer Abhimanyu*, *Pantanchi Soona*, *Samshaya Kallol*. These were all rendered into Kannada.

One of the peculiarities of the Marathi plays (and, consequently, of most Kannada plays) of those days was the large number of songs in classical tunes that they contained. The audience used to attend a dramatic performance not merely to enjoy the play but also the music. In and out of context, a well-known actor would sing a song sometimes for ten or fifteen minutes and when he ended, the audience would applaud and shout 'once more', 'once more'. Then the actor would approach the orchestra and repeat the song. This time he would go on for thirty minutes. The strangest part of the performance was that the audience did not feel any break in continuity. Within a minute, it was prepared to laugh or gasp in tune with the mood of the sequence which followed. There used to be songs even in the village-plays which I had seen earlier on. But they were merely rhythmic recitations. But this was something different: it sounded like superb vocal acrobatics to someone like me who was ignorant of the science of music. If there were a couple of eminent singers in the cast, the success of the play was assured. This was the situation in the urban theatre. It seemed to me that the urban theatre lacked the simplicity of the village performance. In addition to drop curtains, the stage itself was more elaborate. Any stool would no longer do. A king had to have a throne. It was a stool though, but it was plastered with paper in dazzling colours. This audience was perhaps not credited with the powers of imagination which village audiences had. Here we had a 'road-curtain', a 'mahal-curtain' and a 'forest-curtain'. Of course, the audience never bothered about the curtain. They listened in rapt attention to the two characters speaking before a curtain, which depicted a road from Paris and projected with equal emphasis the name of the painter. The Kannada plays were, as a rule, either mythological or 'historical' (though hero kings were actually unknown to history). We did not have as many singers as the Marathi stage had and they were not as good either. So we had to have something else to attract an audience. In the twenties and thirties a distinctive feature of the Kannada stage was the introduction of the so-called 'transfer-scenes'. In a play called *Shani Prabhava*, we would be looking at King Vikrama's court with its pillars and its mahal drop. Then Shani would utter his famous curse. Before the last word of the curse was spoken there would be the sound of a gunshot; the lights would be dimmed and the pillars would be seen hanging as old trees and plants

and the backdrop would become a forest scene. We used to scan the hand-bills eagerly to find out how many transfer-scenes there were in a show. To that extent we were still the village audiences we had been before. For us drama was something which had to be seen and enjoyed. We did enjoy what we saw since it was new and offered to us in great quantity.

All the while, unknown to myself, I must have been qualifying myself to be a play-goer. My ignorance of music hastened the process. A Marathi troupe visited Bijapur and this was a troupe which performed plays that were entirely in prose. The first Marathi play I saw in Bijapur was a political play called *Narangi Nishana* by one Kolhatkar. It had for its background Gandhiji's non-cooperation movement. Earlier, when I was about nine years old, I had travelled to Sholapur from my village (in a bullock-cart) in the company of my father and his friends to see a play of Bal Gandharva's. I do not recollect the name of the play now. During the year of the First World War I saw *Manapman*, *Swayamvara* (Gandharva Company); *Rana Bhimdev* and *Sant Tukaram* (Ganpatrao Joshi's Shahu Nagarvasi Company); and *Vichitra Leela* (Maharashtra Natak Company). They were all staged in Bijapur. In spite of my complete ignorance of the language, I was impressed by these Marathi plays and I also had the feeling that I understood them. This, I realized later, was the effect of the acting, and particularly the performance of one Ganpatrao Joshi. I saw both *Sant Tukaram* and *Rana Bhimdev* with Ganpatrao Joshi in the title role. These plays were of short duration, if we compare them with the standard performance of the time. They were followed by forty-five minutes of humorous skits. Joshi who had thrilled us as a hero in the full-length play would now make us roll in our seats because of his performance in the skit. I have rarely seen pure acting talent of that type. What I saw helped me when I watched Kannada plays, where, in spite of the inanity of the story and the language, in spite of the poor quality of the singing, I always felt the impact of the individual actors. They impressed me more than the sound and fury of the transfer scenes. This was a period which gave us great actors like Gubbi Veeranna, Mohamad Peer, Garud Sadashiva Rao and Vaman Rao Master. When the Kannada stage was in a near-stagnant state, these talented artists kept alive a patient who was already in a comatose condition.

During my college days in Poona, I watched more Marathi plays; the more I saw them, the less I liked our Kannada plays. I was far from being a linguistic traitor. The fault, according to me, lay in the Kannada plays themselves. They still retained the same old mythological base. Even the script was not different from the old text and when it was new, it was only a bad translation, more often than not an unacknowledged one, of a Marathi play. Now and then an attempt was made to appeal to our linguistic patriotism. If a Marathi play dramatised the heroic story of Shivaji, the Kannada play would substitute a Kannada hero. But quite often, the 'author' was not so well-read and our historical heroes were just second-rate *Palegars* (like Echamma Nayak).

I must mention yet another peculiarity of the Kannada plays which I saw during my student days. Every play had a 'comic' actor and some of these comedians were really talented. The main plot was interspersed with comic interludes. Only the first and the last few words in the scenes made a passing

reference to the main story. What intervened in the middle was blatantly irrelevant. But since, with an absolute disregard for the fault of anachronism, it touched on contemporary life, it was thoroughly enjoyed by the audience. (I enjoy it even today, despite my own theories of drama).

I still recall with sorrow that the Kannada stage severely suffered from one great handicap—the indifference of an enlightened audience. Our adults, who used to make it a point to see at least one performance of a visiting Marathi troupe, showed no enthusiasm at all for a Kannada play. The young were not encouraged to see Kannada plays performed. Sometimes the women of the house used to be allowed to see them, but behind that permission was the conviction that these plays ought perhaps to be seen by persons of a lower intellectual calibre. And the women folk, too, liked to see plays only for the sake of the 'gods' who appeared on the stage. I feel that this patronising attitude was responsible to a great extent for the stagnation of the Kannada theatre. Perhaps the poor quality of the performance, the anonymity of the author and the traditional prejudice against the moral norms of the actor's profession were all responsible for such an attitude. There were no newspapers, no social leaders who were prepared to commend the Kannada Theatre. The Kannada stage had to wait for two decades before it attained respectability. But it has still to attract a permanent and an enthusiastic audience. But let me not anticipate.

I remember a night in Bombay. The year was 1929. I was watching a Marathi play which had been popular for fifteen years. As a college student I had enjoyed a performance of the play on more than one occasion. But, on this particular night, in spite of the star musicians, a sense of boredom enveloped me. I reached a point when I said to myself, "This is no play at all". As soon as I realised what I meant, I was astounded. It was about eight months since I had returned from my three years' stay in England. During those three years I had seen a number of plays: plays in which there was music, plays in which there was dance, and plays in prose unembellished by either music or dance. In England I had seen musical comedies, I had seen the plays of Noel Coward, watched actors and actresses like Gerald du Maurier, Gladys Cooper, Tallulah Bankhead (in Ibsen's *The Doll's House*) and Sybil Thorndike (in Shaw's *Saint Joan*). I had also seen Shaw's *Man and Superman* (except the Dream Scene) and *Justice* and *The Silver Box* by John Galsworthy. And on that particular night in Bombay I felt that what I was watching was neither a prose play nor a musical and worst of all there was nothing in it that one could call 'dramatic'. I did not know whether, in the intervening period, the Marathi audience had changed in the way I had changed. I was not sure if the crowd came there just to enjoy the songs sung by the vocalists. I was also not sure if the three years' stay in England had turned me into a *Kaala* sahib. But such hesitations notwithstanding, my reactions were strong and firm.

When I settled in Dharwar, I had the occasion to see many Kannada plays. Veterans like Garud Sadashiv Rao and Vaman Rao Master were still active. They used to perform, if not the same plays, plays which were similar to the old ones. I was impressed by their acting as I had been earlier on. But the performance, as a whole, seemed to me childishly artificial and unbelievably

irrelevant. One felt neither impressed nor entertained. And the saddest part of it was that the audience, too, seemed, by and large, to share my opinion. Was the Kannada Theatre disintegrating? Could it project nothing except poor plagiaristic efforts? People were saying that the cinema, and particularly the talkies, had sounded the death-knell of the Kannada Theatre. It is true that the famous Gubbi company roused great and universal enthusiasm; but that was mainly for the spectacular dumb show, the dumb settings and the live dumb animals. When I witnessed a performance of Mohamad Peer, I felt both heartened and saddened; heartened because of the great actor that Peer was, but saddened because he had to perform in such melodramatic and artificial plays. It was Veeranna and Peer who had an audience (as Hirannayya had later) but not the Theatre. And what about the Theatre that came after them? Soon a time came when professional troupes scrupulously bypassed cities during their tour and eagerly thronged to village *jatras*. The urban audience which helped to establish a Bengali Theatre and a Marathi Theatre simply failed to come into existence in Karnatak. And till that happened the theatre could attain neither stability nor respectability.

This is where I must bring to the notice of the readers a significant feature of the Kannada Theatre. During the early twenties certain literary personalities had applied their mind to the theatre. Balacharya Sakkari (Shanta Kavi) of Dharwar, Narayan Rao Huilgol of Gadag and Kerur Vasudevacharya of Bagalkot wrote plays. The influence of Marathi models was felt in their writings. In spite of that, these plays were entirely different from the other plays staged at that time. The writing was better, the themes and ideas were modern and, of course, they had music. But these plays, though they were performed once or twice with a fair degree of enthusiasm, never reached the wider sections of the Kannada public. There was no organized theatre to perform them on a commercial basis. In contrast to these plays, Kailasam from Bangalore had written one or two plays which, by all standards, were revolutionary, modern and stage-worthy. But they, too, found no place in the commercial theatre. They were dismissed as 'intellectual' and 'literary' and it was left to the youth to perform them. The plays served only one useful purpose. They brought into existence an amateur theatre.

My intention is not to trace the history of the Kannada Theatre, but to describe it as it was then and as it is now. I am one of the few who can claim to have seen the longest span of time between 'then' and 'now'. What the theatre was like then, sixty years ago, has already been described. What it is like now is much more difficult to say. Fortunately for us, the professional theatre has survived in spite of the death prophesied for it twenty years ago. It has recognised the changes of modern life but unfortunately it is not sufficiently equipped to meet the requirements of the present. The skeleton is the same, only some new flesh has been padded on. The result is often something that is hideous. Certain talented actors are doing their best to keep the professional stage alive but they have still to atone for the mistakes of their predecessors. Actor-proprietors like Balappa Enagi are breaking with the tradition of the professional theatre by introducing elements in it that are likely to attract an enlightened audience.

It is easier for me to write about the professional rather than the amateur theatre of Karnatak. I have been too intimately associated with the amateur stage. Even before 1930, and in addition to Shanta Kavi, Kerur, Huilgol and Kailasam, there were some writers who wrote plays out of a fervent desire to enrich modern Kannada literature. But some of these men were really great writers. For a few years dramatists like the late B. M. Srikantayya or Masti Iyengar or C. K. Venkatasamiah and a younger generation which included Shivram Karanth, Kuvempu or A. N. Krishna Rao wrote straight plays and even, in those early days, experimented with tragedies (of the Greek type) and plays in blank verse. Prof. B. M. Srikantayya's *Aswathaman* is in verse and modelled on Greek tragedy. K. V. Puttappa's verse play *Yamana Solu* and Shivram Karanth's operas (*Somiya Sanbhagya*) belong to this category. These plays were produced either by the college teachers and students or by the Amateur Drama Association of Bangalore, the oldest organization of its kind in Karnatak. Naturally enough, in those early days these plays were more admired as literary compositions rather than as scripts for the stage. Usually they were not so much produced, as delivered or recited well.

These dramatists inspired the amateur stage. And amateurs in their turn encouraged the emergence of new dramatic talent. They were only waiting for some one to write for them and keep them active on a regular plane. So it is not surprising that amateur groups came into existence around dramatists like Kailasam, Karanth, Sri Ranga (the present writer), Parvathavani and other playwrights. Many of those who had written plays in the earlier days turned to other literary forms. Among the earlier playwrights, Kailasam, Sri Ranga, Parvathavani and Ksheerasagara stuck to drama as their genre. Girish Karnad, P. Lankesh, Kambar and Chandrashekhar Patil of the younger generation, also chose this literary form and adhered to it. There are a number of other playwrights writing with the amateur theatre in view. There are a few who write for the professional theatre. Strangely enough, except senior writers like B. Puttuswamiah and the late Bellave Narahara Shastri, there is hardly any dramatist of the professional theatre who is considered a respectable (that is a literary) writer.

The irony of the situation is that though we boast able dramatists, we have no amateur theatre worth mentioning. Except in Bangalore or Mysore or in the small town of Sagar (Shimoga) there is hardly any regular theatrical activity. The plays of Sri Ranga or Lankesh or Girish Karnad have seen more performances in Hindi and sometimes in Marathi than in Kannada itself. Consequently, more attention is paid to plays in their written form. Our dramatists, too, seem to have traversed a long distance. Sixty or seventy years ago, they were anonymous moral messiahs; in the thirties and forties they were patriotic protestants; today they are confessing catholics. If, in its early days, the Kannada Stage was the playground of gods, today it is the battle-ground of Satan.

If our Kannada dramatists have invaded other languages, it is also true that other languages have invaded the Kannada stage. When graduates from the National School of Drama, Delhi, were introduced (by the present

writer) for the first time to the Bangalore amateur stage, our young actors started to learn modern techniques of production, direction, composition, setting and lighting. This enthusiasm has still not worn off. Almost every second amateur production is advertised as an 'experiment'. That word has become as effective an advertising stunt as the word 'transfer scene' in the professional stage of the thirties. Our dramatists and directors and amateur groups try to ensure that the latest thing that 'happened' in the theatre of the West finds an echo here. Though this offers promise of a better future, it also confirms the traditional belief that southerners are only good beginners, and incapable of sustained effort.



Shambhu Maharaj

Shambhu Maharaj

Mohanrao Kalyanpurkar

Maharaj Bindadeen, uncle of Shambhu Maharaj, and the revered patriarch of the Lucknow *gharana* was well-known for his *abhinaya*, so much so that his name has become synonymous with *abhinaya* in Kathak. He was short in stature and not strikingly handsome. But it is said that the gestures of his eyes and hands during the performance of his *abhinaya* created illusions that were incredible. There is a legend that when he performed in the Nathdwara temple, the entire congregation prostrated itself before him. When Maharaj Bindadeen appeared before them in the posture of Krishna holding the flute, they saw him as a vision of the Lord Himself. Such was the spell of his *abhinaya*.

The most spontaneous and handsome tribute to this great dancer comes from none other than the distinguished philosopher of art, Ananda Coomaraswamy. In his *Notes on Indian Dramatic Technique*, published in 1914, he writes,

"I have never seen, nor do I hope to see, better acting than I saw once in Lucknow, when an old man a poet and dancer and a teacher of many, many dancing girls sang a Herd-Girl's 'complaint to the mother of Krishna'. This famous dancer whose name is Binda Deen, is a devout Brahman Thus, before an audience of pupils and neighbours, this old man sat on the ground and sang his poem. Picking up a scarf, he used it as a veil and no one could have remembered that he was anything but a shy and graceful young girl, telling a story with every sort of dramatic gesture of the hand and eyes. She told how Krishna had stolen the butter and the curds, what pranks he played, of his love-making and every sort of naughtiness. Every feature of the face, every movement of the body and hands was intentional, controlled, hieratic; not all his own devotion to Krishna spoiled his art to the least degree."

One had only to watch the performance of Shambhu Maharaj, the nephew of the great maestro Maharaj Bindadeen to experience the truth of what Ananda Coomaraswamy wrote, what he sought to communicate when he described the exquisite *abhinaya* of Maharaj Bindadeen. The older generation of Lucknow, who were closely associated with Maharaj Bindadeen and had seen him perform on a number of occasions, maintained that Shambhu Maharaj had inherited the great mimetic powers of his uncle. They also said that he could lend to his *abhinaya*, the same aesthetic grandeur and artistic excellence that his uncle did.

Maharaj Bindadeen died when Shambhu Maharaj was a mere child of eight and so he could not impart his art directly to his nephew. Shambhu

Maharaj was, therefore, entirely trained by his illustrious elder brother Achchan Maharaj, whom he held in the highest esteem. Later Shambhu Maharaj was able to carve a distinctive style of his own which was more in tune with his own dynamic personality. His style bore the stamp of his own genius. He excelled in *abhinaya* and even his guru paid a tribute to him for his achievement in this sphere.

Shambhu Maharaj was tall and handsome. He had a sinewy figure and chiselled features. A broad forehead, well-marked eyebrows, large and eloquent eyes and sensuous lips were ideal assets and he used them to advantage in his *abhinaya*. It was his practice to begin his *abhinaya* performance with a recital of the text of the composition; then he went on to do the *abhinaya*. His was a well-trained voice, rich and melodious. He modulated it to suit the purport of the words and with such a charming effect that he could immediately establish a rapport with his audience and communicate to his listeners the basic mood of the song. The *abhinaya* proper began with the varied and suggestive use of his eloquent eyes and mobile face. This he called *nain bhava*. The term is perhaps not a strictly academic one but the effect it created on the audience was really amazing. The illustration of the nine *rasas* with just the use of the eyes is not new to *abhinaya*. I have witnessed artists in other styles perform it with rare skill. A slight digression will illustrate the power that lies latent in the eyes. There is that beautiful *shloka* of Adi Shankaracharya in *Soundarya-Lahari*, describing the *Rasa Drishti*.

शिवे श्रृङ्गारार्द्रा तदितरमुखे कुत्सनपरा
सरोषा गङ्गायां गिरिशचरिते विस्मयवती ।
हराहिभ्यो भीता सरसिरुह सौभाग्यजयिनी
सखीषु स्मेरा ते मयि जनति दृष्टिः सकरुणा ॥

"Oh Mother! Thy gaze is soft with love towards Shiva; full of disgust towards other people; furious towards Ganga; expressive of wonder at Girisha's life career; full of dread (when confronted) with the snakes (ornaments) of Hara; victorious over the beautiful colour of the lotus; smiles on thy *sakhis*; and is full of compassion towards me."

The nine *rasas*, *Shringara*, *Bibhatsa*, *Raudra*, *Adbhuta*, *Bhayanaka*, *Veera*, *Hasya*, and *Karuna* are described as they express themselves in the Mother's gaze.

Shambhu Maharaj's *nain bhava* was followed by a further elaboration of the *bhavas*, with the use of hand gestures which he called *kara bhava*. Though he employed a large number of those prescribed in the ancient texts, he did not make a fetish of terminology. But one had no doubt that he used all the Head Gestures, Eye Gestures, Eyebrow Gestures, Neck Gestures, almost all the One-hand Gestures and a large number of the Combined-hand Gestures of the texts.

When a critic questioned him about his apathy towards the terms of the *mudras*, he said:

जब मैं किसी तुमरी या भजन का भाव ब्रूताता हूँ
तब उसमें जो रस और भाव हैं उनको मैं आप
तक पहुँचाने की कोशिश करता हूँ। अगर
इसमें मैं कामयाब रहा तो मुझे मुद्राओं के
नामोंसे कोई वास्ता नहीं। जो हस्तकथा सुबाएँ
उस वक्त बन जाती हैं उनको हम "उपजत
अङ्ग-स्वभाव या स्वाभाविक कहते हैं।

"When I do the *abhinaya* for any *thumri* or *bhajan*, my aim is to convey to you the *rasa* and the *bhavas* of the composition. Once I succeed in doing this, I feel I have nothing to do with the names of the *mudras*. I term the gestures which are used by me spontaneous and natural."

To him the execution of *abhinaya* was more important than the knowledge of the names of the *mudras* he had used, because he believed in the *total* impact of his interpretation on his audience. He considered this the quintessence of the art of *abhinaya*. But he was not against the terms and teaching their proper meaning and use to the new generation of pupils. "You must certainly teach the names of the *mudras* to your pupils because it is a good thing to possess such knowledge", he said to me once and then added humorously, "If now, at this stage, I think of learning the names, I think I will forget my *abhinaya* just as the centipede forgot how to crawl in trying to count the number of its feet."

It is well-nigh impossible to put on paper the subtle nuances of his *nain bhava* and to describe in detail his *abhinaya*. But we can catch a glimpse of its salient features, using as a concrete example his favourite *thumri*—*Koun gali gayo Shyam*.

कौन गलिन गयो श्याम, बत्ता दे गुंया ।
गोकुल दुंदी वृंदावन दुंदी मथुरा में हो गयी शाम ॥

"Tell me, my friend, which path (*gali*) my Shyam took. I have searched (for him) in Gokul and I have searched (for him) in Vrindavan (and now) at Mathura it is evening (getting dark)."

This is how he began his *abhinaya*:

One. *Koun*—raising the left eye-brow; *gali*—tracing an imaginary path-way with the eyes from over the right shoulder to the far corner of the hall; *gayo*—raising the body and the head a little and looking far away in that direction; *Shyam*—a slight movement of the neck (*sundari greeva*).

Two. *Koun*—raising the right eye-brow, simultaneously tilting the head very slightly; *gali*—tracing a path as before but from the left to the right corner of the hall; *gayo*—raising the body and the head and craning the neck to look into the distance in a searching movement; *Shyam*—the same neck movement with a slight frown to show disappointment.

Three. *Koun*—raising both the eye-brows with a slight upward jerk of the head; *gali*—tracing with the eyes a winding path from the near front to



"Koun gali gayo Shyam?"



"Is he attached to some 'gali' like the 'kajal' to the eye?"



Shyam holding the flute.

the far end of the hall; *gayo*—raising the body slightly supported by the right hand and looking far ahead with a searching expression and a slight frown, *Shyam*—drooping eye-lids and a slow tilting down of the head to express utter disappointment.

Words fail to describe the finer shades of the *nain bhava*. One had glimpses of the subtle nuances of anxiety, disappointment, impatience, touching pathos, abject helplessness and anger at the *sakhi's* reluctance to divulge the secret of his movements.

After the *nain bhava* which never failed to send the audience into raptures, he proceeded with the *kara bhava*, which I will describe by trying to identify the *mudras* he used. It goes without saying that all the hand gestures were in harmony with the emotions expressed on the face.

One. *Koun*—*alapadma* with the right hand; *gali*—*soochi hasta* with the same right hand pointing to the imagined *gali*; *gayo Shyam*—a searching look and placing both hands in the *ardhachandra mudra* close to each other over the head to denote the crown (*mukut*).

Two. *Koun*—both the hands in *pataka*, stretched out slightly in the direction of the *sakhi*; *gali*—describing a winding path in front with both hands in the *pataka mudra*, and the hands facing each other; *gayo Shyam*—looking straight ahead with one hand in *arala* above the head, facing outwards and the other near the lips to suggest the flute.

Three. A further elaboration of the theme was suggested thus: The *sakhi* was questioned. The hands pointed in various directions to say:

- "Is this the *gali*?" "No!!"
- "Then it may be this one?" "No!!"
- "Sure enough it must be this?" "No!!"



"Koun gali?" (addressing the 'sakhi').



"I have searched (for him) in Gokul and Vrindaban. I am tired."

To show the exasperation of the questioner he lightly tapped the back of his right hand on the palm of his left or on the right thigh as if to say,

"Oh! How can I ever find Him if you keep on deceiving me thus?"

All these gestures he used to combine with the line *bata do gunya*, cajoling the friend, beseeching her with folded hands, touching her feet humbly and then showing her own annoyance because the friend has turned a deaf ear to all her entreaties.

The next step was to emphasise the various ways of searching for Him.

- (i) Parting the low branches of a tree to get a better view (*pataka* hands both turned outwards).
- (ii) Removing an object which obstructed the view—a vertical *pataka* turned outwards and moved away from the line of vision by the other hand with *sarpashirsha mudra*.
- (iii) Looking over a hedge or a small parapet—placing both *pataka hastas* one hand exactly over the other with the tips of the middle finger of one hand touching the wrist of the other hand and kept parallel to the ground just below the line of vision. Slowly raising the head as if looking over it.
- (iv) Holding the branches of a tree on the right with both hands—the right hand in the *mushti mudra* turned outwards, and raised above the head and the left also in a similar *mudra* held a little below, near about the right shoulder, searching intently from the left to the right. Then followed a detailed description of Shyam.
 - (a) Shyam with his long curly hair—both hands in the *soochi hasta*, slowly moving down the temples to the shoulders, the stretched finger making revolving movements.
 - (b) Who wears the *mukut*—with the *ardhachandra* hands as described earlier.

- (c) Dark as the cloud—both *pataka* hands, palms down held high above the head, describing the movement of the cloud.
- (d) Who wears the *Vajrayanti Mala*—showing the spot where the garland is and with the right hand in *mrigashirsha mudra*.
- (e) Who wears armlets—placing the armlets in their proper places and tightening them. The string is held in the teeth and the bead provided is moved towards the arm with the *hamsasya hasta*.
- (f) Who wears wristlets—the wristlets are fastened by tightening the clasps provided with the *hamsasya hasta*.
- (g) Who wears the *peetambara*—describe the tying of the *peetambara*.
- (h) And finally, Shyam, who plays on the flute—both hands near the lips (to the right) in *arala mudra*.

Then Shambhu Maharaj went on to describe *sanchari bhavas*. This was his forte. He had such a deep perception and such imaginative gifts that their depiction was really exquisite.

- (i) "Has his beautiful form reached another heart through (the *gali* of) the eyes?" Both the hands with *hamsasya mudra* pointing downwards, moving down from the front of the eyes towards the heart.
- (ii) "Has he captivated somebody's heart like sweet perfume?" Applying the perfume on the back of the hand and inhaling it.
- (iii) "Has he entered another heart as the melody of his flute through the ears?"
- (iv) "Has he become as attached to another *gali* as the *sindur* is to the parting of the hair?"
- (v) "Has he become attached to a *gali* like the *kajal* or *surma* to the eye?"

Sanchari bhavas were then enacted by comparing the wearing of the various ornaments of the ear, nose, bangles on the wrists and the finger-rings on the fingers to the entering and adorning a *gali* by Shyam. Shambhu Maharaj continued to unfold the *bhavas*, making each one more appealing than the previous one. The crowning *bhava* was expressed thus: the death of a person, the laying of the body on the funeral pyre, the breaking of the bangles, the removing of all ornaments and washing off the *sindur* by his wife to suggest widowhood, the lighting of the pyre, the sorrowing women following with her eyes the patterns of the *galis* made by the smoke and asking the same question *koun gali gayo Shyam*. Shambhu Maharaj executed this particular *bhava* with such rare skill that it invariably brought tears to the eyes of the audience and even Shambhu Maharaj himself seemed visibly moved.

He did not dwell at length on the last two lines of the song. Gokul was shown by the milking of the cows and the churning of the curds while *dhoondi* was shown by gestures suggesting a frantic search. Vrindavana was depicted by maidens walking down the *ghats* of the Jamuna for water. Mathura

was identified with the ruling Kamsa by a gesture suggesting his moustaches and an arrogant look. *Ho gayi sham*—the rising of the sun, tracing its path through the sky with the eyes or the hand and ending with the sunset shown by closing of the eyes, lighting an oil lamp and setting out to search for the foot-prints of Shyam.

Thus ended the magnificent performance. One marvelled at the depth of his conception and the picturesque elegance with which he demonstrated the *bhavas*. The lingering warmth seemed to cling to you for days on end.

Another favourite of his was *Madho kahi na jat dukh Brijake* which described the plight of the hapless *gopis* of Braj when Lord Krishna left them and stayed at Mathura. Uddhava was sent by Krishna to Braj to pacify the *gopis* and teach them the philosophy of Brahman. Uddhava returned to Mathura, converted to the philosophy of love. In this song he narrates the pangs of separation experienced by the *gopis* and other beings in Braj. I still recall that evening in Lucknow when Shambhu Maharaj sang those lines. On this particular occasion his *abhinaya* reached such heights that not a single individual in the audience could hold back his tears. The great maestro himself was so visibly moved that he had to bring the performance to an abrupt stop.

In his younger days he preferred to render these songs: *Kisne chilman se mara nazara mujhe; Tan-e-mareez me dam ka shumar baki hai; Chale aiho Kanha Jamuna kinare mero gaon; Nikas chalbe tum ko laike sanwariya* and present their meaning through his *abhinaya*. These songs used to be considered as commonplace verses by many performers. But the genius of Shambhu Maharaj and his artistic brilliance lent them a refined meaning and a new dignity. Once a connoisseur chided him for choosing such songs. Shambhu Maharaj was hurt by such criticism. He considered it a challenge and with the superb *abhinaya* accompanying *Chale aiho Kanha Jamuna kinare mero gaon* he won the acclaim of the accuser.

Shambhu Maharaj was a master of *abhinaya*. But he was also an adept in the *nritta* aspect of the Kathak style of dance. His execution of the various *bols* such as the *amad*, *paran* and *paramelu* bore the stamp of his distinctive style and individuality. He had improvised *hastakas* for the traditional *bols* and they were both picturesque and graceful. He always tried to avoid speed in performance and laid greater stress on precision in the co-ordinated movements of the body, arms, hands, head and eyes, accompanied, of course, with the correct timing of the foot-work. All his compositions had a lyrical form and extraordinary grace. Every movement had the right accent which highlighted the particular syllable of the *bol* and the combination of all movements helped to emphasise the beauty of the complete *bol*.

He visualised the *bol* as a personality and then conceived appropriate *hastakas* to suit its character. Thus, for the *parans* which are composed of heavy and forceful *pakhawaj* syllables, he always employed vigorous movements and for some of the soft sounding *natawari bols* he used exceedingly light and fragile movements which matched their temper.

When he introduced these innovations, he always sought the sanction of his eldest brother, Guru Achchan Maharaj who, in turn, invariably showed his approval by a word of praise and appreciation.

Here are some of the *bol/s* which he himself danced, adding to them a personal touch. He also taught them to his pupils.

Amad:

Amad is a Persian word which means advent or coming. This piece consists of a set pattern of *natawari* syllables preceded by a traditionally accepted *pakhawaj paran*. The following *amad* was a special favourite of Shambhu Maharaj. He provided extremely graceful movements with enough scope to cover a large area of the stage.

घा त क्का थुं | गा s धा गे | दिं गे ता s | धा दिं ता s |
 धे ता क्किट धा | त् क्का थुं गा | त्कि टत् का s | त्तिट कुता गदिगन |
 ताथेई तत् थेई | आथेई तत् थेई | थेई ताथेई s ताथेई | थेई थेई तत् तत् |
 ता
 x

Here is another *amad* in which he deviated a little from the convention that every syllable of the *bol* must be produced by the feet. He gave this conventional *amad* lines as well as postures which were very refreshing.

तत् तत् ता तुक्क | दण दण झिटकिट | थो थुंडं s ग तुक्क | थुं तुक्क दधिगण |
 थेई s s तक्क | थुं तुक्क दधिगण | थेई s s तक्क | थुं तुक्क दधिगण |
 ताथेई तत् थेई | आथेई तत् थेई | थेई ताथेई s ताथेई | थेई s s तत् |
 ता
 x

Paramelu:

Paramelu is a piece in which syllables, seemingly of various percussion instruments, are combined with the *natawari bols*. Some of conventional syllables used are—*daga daga, thudanga, dhetam, thoonga-noonga, dhilanga, jhan-jhan*, etc.

धे ता s म धे | ता s म दग दग | थुं तुक्क थो s | धे ता s म धे |
 ता s म दग दग | थुं तुक्क थो s | त्किट धिक्किट तुक्क | थुं तुक्क दधिगण |
 थुं s गनुं s ग तुक्क | थुं s तुक्क दधिगण | थेई s s तुक्क | थुं s गनुं s ग तुक्क |
 थुं तुक्क दधिगण | थेई s s तुक्क | थुं s गनुं s ग तुक्क | थुं तुक्क दधिगण | ता
 x

Natawari:

Natawari is an epithet used to describe Lord Krishna. The word means "the best among the dancers". It stems from a legend: when Krishna subdued the monster-serpent Kaliya and danced on his hoods, the syllables *ta, theyi*, and *tat* were produced. Hence all the *bols* composed of these syllables and their derivatives, *digdig, tigdha, tram*, are classed as *natawari*.



Maharaj Bindadeen

दिगदिगदिगदिगथेई s | ताथेई s ताथेई s थेई | s तत् थो s | दिगदिगदिगदिगथेई s |
 ताथेई s ताथेई s थेई | s तत् थो s | तिगधाधातिगधाधादिगदिग | तिगधाधातिगधाधा थो |
 तिगधाधातिगधाधादिगदिग | तिगधाधा तिगधाधादिगदिग | ताथेई s ताथेई s ताथेई s | s थेई s ताथेई s तिगधाधा |
 ता
 x

Paran:

Pieces composed exclusively of the *pakhawaj* syllables are termed, *parans*. This *paran* was a great favourite of Shambhu Maharaj.

किट लुक् शुं शुं । ना ति ट ता । ऽ धा दिं ता । किट धा दिं ता ।
 क ति ट धा । दिं ता क्त् ऽ । ति ट धा दिं । ता ऽ किडधेत् ।
 ऽ धा दिं ता । क ति ट धा । ऽ शुं ऽ त । धा ऽ क ति ।
 ट धा ऽ शुं । ऽ त धा ऽ । क ति ट धा । ऽ शुं ऽ त । धा

I was associated with him for thirty years, starting from 1939. I had the good fortune of witnessing many of his innumerable performances. I revered him as my guru and he had a great affection for me as his pupil.

As a person, he was very impulsive and believed in intense and moment-to-moment living. There was a commanding, an almost arrogant note in his form of speech. This was in contrast to the other side of his nature which was gentle and loving. His mother and his eldest brother were often hurt by his overbearing manner and prodigal ways.

I will always remember the last performance at Lucknow in 1969 when he performed in my house. He was ailing and looked very weak and tired. But he agreed to dance because his friends pressed him to do so. He started with the song *Jamuna kinare aj Shyam ne sakhiyon ki chunariyan chcheen layin*. We heard it for the first time then. His voice sounded feeble and his gestures lacked their usual force but the interpretation carried the same spontaneity and dignity. His *sanchari bhavas* were full of the same charm. We did not dream then that this would be his last performance.

Abhinaya had become almost second nature with him. Even on his death-bed, just a few minutes before he breathed his last, he was heard instructing his nephew Birju Maharaj how to render the *Bahut door ho pas ao to janu*, (You are too far away; come closer to me and I will recognise you). The line can be interpreted in a myriad ways but it seemed as though he was addressing Death itself. Within a few seconds he slumped on the pillow across his lap. His beautiful eyes remained open. Perhaps even Death was so fascinated by their appeal that it did not have the heart to close them.

Dadu Indurikar

(Dadu Indurikar, the renowned tamasha artist of Maharashtra, was the recipient this year of the Best Actor Award instituted by the Sangeet Natak Akademi. We publish here the text of an interview with him by Vijay Tendulkar, the well-known dramatist and Kumud Mehta, the Editor.)

V.T.: Shall we start right from the beginning? When did you first see a tamasha* being performed? You mentioned that your father was a tamasha artist. Can you remember the first time you saw it being enacted?

D.I.: When I was still at school. The *jatra tamasha* groups used to visit our village. I was terribly drawn to this form of entertainment.

V.T.: How old were you then?

D.I.: Maybe six or seven.

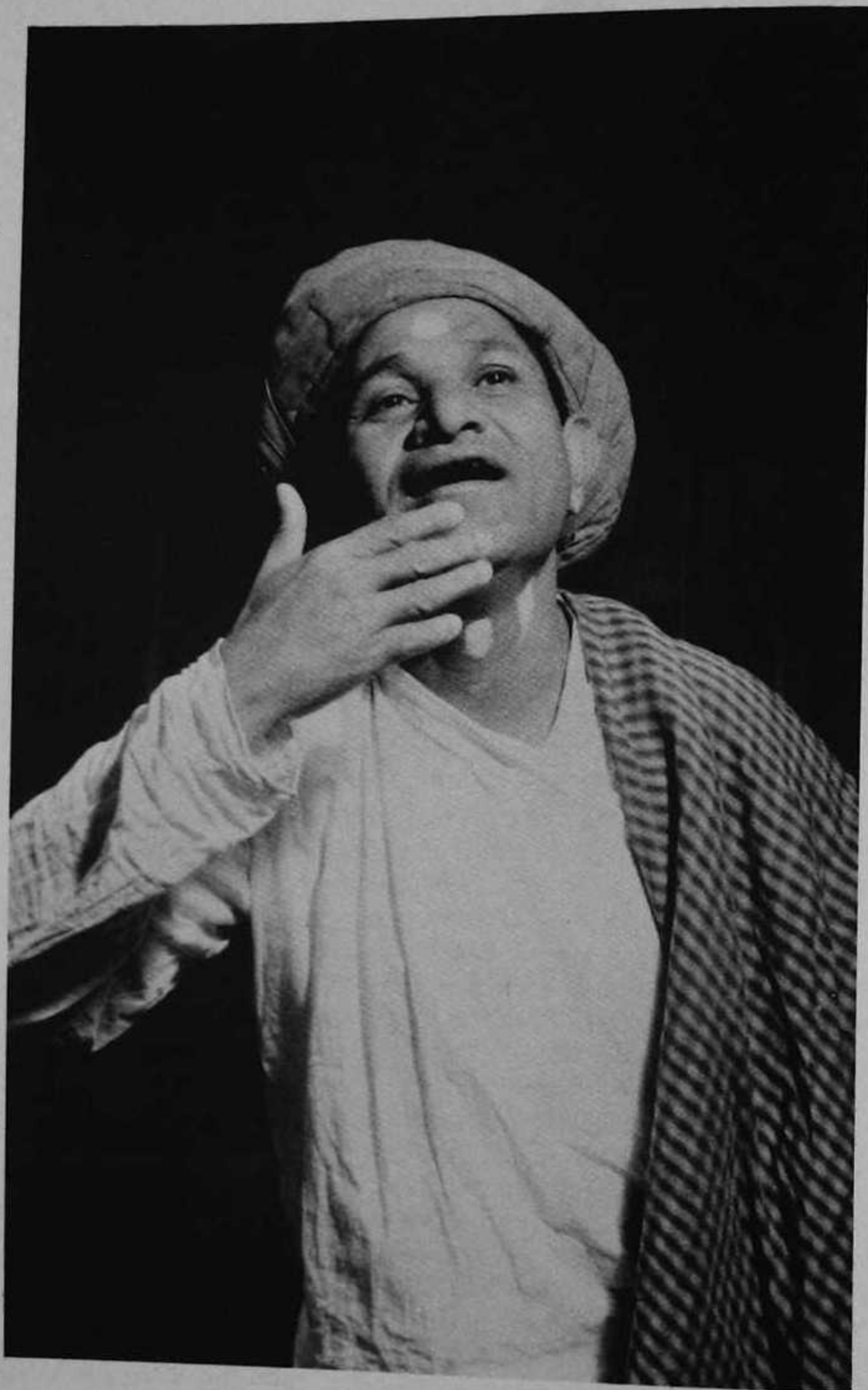
V.T.: Which means you started watching such shows before you were sufficiently old to understand most things?

D.I.: I developed a liking for such shows. The minute I learnt that a group had come to our village, I'd go to the show. I used to sit in the front row. Nobody stopped me. Because my father had been a *tamasha* artist. People would say, "Let him sit in front". My father had a disciple called Khandu Dagdu Sungane. His disciple, Kusha Umarikar, always brought his group to our village. I never missed a single performance of that troupe. This Kusha was a very clever *songadya* (clown). He had the audience laughing all the time. Naturally I used to laugh too. Then I asked myself: But why doesn't the *songadya* laugh? So even when I was quite small, I understood that the *songadya* knows one trick: Make the others laugh. Don't laugh yourself. Then there were the *bhedik lavanis* of my father in the house. I learnt them by heart. My father died when I was very small. Just after my first marriage.

V.T.: How old were you then?

D.I.: Six or seven years old. Couldn't even wear a *dhoti*! Used to wear shorts or a loin cloth. My step-mother used to wrap it round me and send me to school. I had formed one habit. As soon as school began, I used to learn by heart all the poems in our textbooks. When I was in the first

*The *tamasha* begins with the *gana*, a song in praise of Ganpati. This is followed by the *gavlanas* sequence, where Krishna and his friend (the *songadya*) accost the milkmaids who are carrying curds and milk to the market at Mathura. The repartees exchanged by the *songadya* and the elderly *mowshi* provide the rather ribald humour in this sequence. The songs are known as *gavlanas*. Then *lavanis* are sung and their appeal is quite often erotic; a spectator sometimes offers cash on the spot (*daulatjada*) for a song that he fancies. In the *rangbaji* which follows there is a great deal of pungent dialogue. Farcical sequences intervene before the *vag*, which forms the main narrative of the *tamasha*. The *vag* usually deals with legendary and historical themes. The *tamasha* ends with the *mujra*, the final salutation.



Dadu Indurikar

standard, I knew all those they learnt in the second standard. When in the second, I knew those they studied in the third. It was like that with me. If I listened to a song once or twice, I could remember the whole of it. That is after I had learnt to read and write.

V.T.: *These bhedik lavanis your father wrote, what are they like?*

D.I.: They are *shastra*-based. If you like, I will sing you one of my father's *lavanis*. It's called *Bailapowalachyi Bhedik*. When they adorn the bullocks for the festival, he seems then like a bridegroom. The whole ritual of decorating the bullock for the festival is described here. I used to know all the *lavanis*. And the people around would admire me. They'd say, "A tiger's cub can't go astray! You don't have to teach a baby fish how to swim in the water". Then they used to present me with a rupee. A silver rupee, or a *pagota* (an elaborate headgear) and a shawl. I would go and give it all to my mother. And she would go to the old market and buy me a vest!

V.T.: *Your step-mother?*

D.I.: No. My own mother and my step-mother. They were both alive. They used to buy me books and shorts. And my brother—the one I told you about—the one who died the day before yesterday—he used to work terribly hard all the time, hew stones to support us. He was very, very good to me. Another man in his place would have thrown me out. He was proud of me. He lived in Wowal. He has his own house there. But my father was good to him. That's why it seems as though he came and breathed his last in our house.

V.T.: *You said you were married then?*

D.I.: Yes.

V.T.: *But you were so young!*

D.I.: Seven or eight.

V.T.: *Your bride?*

D.I.: Three. She was just an infant—used to roam round half-naked in the marriage pandal. My first wife, she left me; then I married the second one, the one who is now in Khandala.

V.T.: *Why did your first wife leave you?*

D.I.: She didn't like this *tamasha* business. She died two years ago.

V.T.: *Any children?*

D.I.: Two sons. Both of them died.

V.T.: *How?*

D.I.: Now you know what this *tamasha* business is like! When they were ill, I could never manage to get there in time. Otherwise things wouldn't have taken this turn. She felt, "We had these lovely sons. And nobody to take care of them! They are dead. What's the point continuing my life with a husband like this?" That's the way she felt; but I loved my profession. That's how it was. So in 1940....

V.T.: *How old were you then?*

D.I.: Say twenty years old.

V.T.: *Your schooling?*

D.I.: I had studied upto the seventh standard. I could have got a job as a teacher. But I was mad about the *tamasha*. I just couldn't take any interest in a job. I continued with my *tamasha*. You know Kisan Kusgaokar. He helped me to make a start. In 1940 we started. Not at this Bangdiwala

Theatre. We used to do the *Supari Tamasha* 'here' during the fairs.

V.T.: *What do you mean when you say 'here'?*

D.I.: I mean the *maval* area. We had Dhondiba, Ravji, Mahantbhau, Gawali. Then Dadu Indurikar, the younger Dadu Indurikar (son of this brother who died the day before yesterday). Then we had Dasharath Bhalya-rao. Then we had one of my nephews, Baban. All of us were there in that group.

V.T.: *How much did you earn at that time? Every month?*

D.I.: In the villages we got just our meals, nothing more. They listened to the *tamasha* and fed us. If someone was really pleased with us, he would give us two annas or more. In all we might get say two or four rupees.

V.T.: *And all this as late as 1940?*

D.I.: Then we got two annas. Now it goes up to a rupee. Those days they fed us. We loved doing our *tamasha*.

V.T.: *Then you had no time for your kids?*

D.I.: None at all. That's why my wife left me. I don't blame her.

V.T.: *The rest of your group faced the same difficulties?*

D.I.: Yes. In 1945 we started off at Bangdiwala's. Then we went to Nasik.

V.T.: *You said you had formed a tamasha group in 1940. And all of you had these problems. So you did the tamasha because you loved to do it? Not for the money?*

D.I.: Of course not. You can earn money in many ways. But we loved our art. We wanted to go on with the *tamasha*.

V.T.: *Sometimes it is said that the tamasha artists are poor. But they can't leave the profession. They can't train themselves, develop in any way because of their miserable plight. And you insist that it wasn't just a way of earning money, that you loved to perform?*

D.I.: It doesn't matter very much if there's no money or food to be had. But there must be a show on at night. We all agreed on that. Quite determined. So from Bangdiwala we went to Nasik. Then to Poona. Poona's the real centre. They say the students there are very intelligent, the *pehalwans* very strong, the *tamagirs* very clever. They used to say if a *tamasha* is a hit in Poona, it will be a hit in the whole universe—not to talk of the world....

V.T.: *That's what they used to say about plays too.*

D.I.: The Poona audience enjoyed our show. They invited us to Sholapur. We went and stayed there for a fortnight. We were about to leave Sholapur. I remember it was a Sunday and the people there said, "Stay on. You must". I said, "We have to go". So they set on us with sticks and knives. Now my cousin Maruti, he was scared of such happenings. I wanted to go and report to the Police Chowki. But Maruti said, "People will say that we went to Sholapur and came back with a proper beating". So we stayed on. Then Maruti died. For six months I was so dejected; like a madman I was. Then that Kisan Kusgaokar came and said to me, "There were four calling themselves after Vishnu Indurikar. One has gone. But there are still three of them left to keep alive their father's name. Rahu Indurikar had just you. And you were born when he was gone in years." What Kusgaokar said was true. He said, "Now you loved Maruti, didn't you? Like a brother. Start a *tamasha* troupe in his

name". So we began and we continued as Maruti Indurikar's *tamasha* group, right till 1954.

V.T.: *Now when you started afresh, where did you find the dancers?*

D.I.: There was a girl called Soni from Sholapur. And Kometai's daughters. We started off with them.

V.T.: *But how did you find them?*

D.I.: Find? There are such girls everywhere. You go and give them the money and bring them back with you.

V.T.: *If they are already with a troupe, that's a different matter! But when you have to find fresh talent, how do you go about it?*

D.I.: Parents want their girls to learn how to dance. You go and get them. Tie the anklets round their feet and teach them. To sing, to accompany the song with the right *ada*. We used to try and teach them all these things.

V.T.: *Who? You or someone else?*

D.I.: I used to teach them. Or I used to say to them, "Watch that troupe. See how the girl goes about it".

V.T.: *You mean they learnt to dance that way?*

D.I.: Yes, of course. Now this Prabha Joglekar. She is a village girl. We taught her. That is, Shankar Shevnekar and I taught her. Now people still say there's no one like her. Even Vijayabai Mehta said, "There's a lot we can learn from her". We took pains to teach her. That's why she shone, compared to the rest. She is quite clever.

V.T.: *You mean you teach them how to dance?*

D.I.: Yes, of course. I tie those anklets round my feet and tell them how to do it.

V.T.: *Where did you learn? Or you just picked it up, watching others?*

D.I.: Mostly watching.

V.T.: *But you have to know the rhythm, the time measure both in music and dance! How did you learn that? Watching, listening since your childhood days?*

D.I.: After all, what's rhythm? Formerly we had only the *tuntuna*, our one-stringed instrument, and the *dholak*, our small drum. This harmonium is a recent thing. Before that we used to tune the *tuntuna* and adjust the *dholak* to that note. We used to begin and then sing to the tune of the instrument.

V.T.: *But till which year was this? When did the harmonium enter on the scene?*

D.I.: Bhau Mang brought it in.

V.T.: *In which year?*

D.I.: Must be in the thirties or forties. Bhau Mang brought the harmonium into the sphere of the *tamasha*.

V.T.: *You mean to say you never used it till then?*

D.I.: I think so.

V.T.: *At least not in your shows!*

D.I.: Certainly not in ours. When we were with Bangdiwala, we never had a harmonium with us. We had a *tuntuna*, the *tal*, a *halgi* and a *dhol*. My brother Maruti he played the *dhol*. He was marvellous. As soon as he entered, people would watch his face, hear him play the *dhol* and applaud him heartily. He was really good.

V.T.: *You can play the dhol yourself?*
D.I.: I can. But not as well as he could. Of course, formerly I was the one who would play the *dhol*. When I went to my sister's village, I used to play the *dhol* and sing *bhedik lavanis*. In that village there was a man called Shidba Mahar. He was a regular *ganja* man. He brought Bapurao into our *maval* area.

V.T.: *You mean Patthe Bapurao?*
D.I.: Yes. He had a long beard, wore a saffron robe and had a *lungi* tied round his waist. I thought he was some *gosavi*. When I went there, some one said, "This Laxmi's brother sings well". So they said, "Bring the *dhol*. Let's hear him". I was always game for this sort of thing. I took the *dhol*, tuned it and sang a *gavlana*. I sang it. You know whose it was? Bapurao's!

V.T.: *Which one?*
D.I.: *Eka nandachi nari*. And he brought out his *chilim* and then put it aside.
V.T.: *You mean Bapurao? Patthe Bapurao?*
D.I.: He set it aside and sat watching me. Right to the end of the *gavlana*. He didn't draw the *chilim* even once. It was extinguished. He said to Shidba Mahar, "Bring him here".

V.T.: *Who said this?*
D.I.: Patthe Bapurao! You can't imagine his style of speech! "Shidu, who's playing the *dhol*? Bring him here". Then that old fellow said to me, "Dadu, come here. He wants you". I was scared stiff. I thought, "This *gosavi*, what does he want with me?" I went up to him. I was afraid all the time. He said, "Which part are you from?" I said, "From Nilgiri". He asked, "What's your name? Who taught you this *gavlana*?" So I said, "These *tamasha* folk come to my village. I listen and try to remember". "Who taught you to play the *dhol*?" So I said, "My father died when I was a child. There was the *dhol* he had left behind. I learnt to play it just like that". Then he asked me, "You mean nobody taught you to play it?" I said, "No, nobody taught me". So he said, "Come and sit by me". So I went and sat near him and I thought, "Must have been a *tamasgir*!" He said, "Sit. Sing". And the *chilim* went on. That's how it was. That was in 1940.

V.T.: *Where was he then?*

D.I.: Near Poona.

V.T.: *When you met him the first time, how old was he?*

D.I.: Very old.

V.T.: *And you?*

D.I.: I was already married then.

V.T.: *Was he pleased when he heard you sing his gavlana?*

D.I.: Yes.

V.T.: *When you saw him first how did he seem to you? And the second time?*

D.I.: Really like a *gosavi*—the first time. I was scared. Then that Shidba Mahar he said, "Don't be scared. Come with me". People would say, "Let's go, Master". They called Bapurao 'Master'. They'd say, "Come to our village". He'd start off with the *chilim* suddenly.

V.T.: *Drawing in the chilim?*

D.I.: Yes. He was terribly fond of his *ganja*. He drew in the *chilim*, and wrote a song. Maruti and I went to him and said, "Give us something for

shubhamangala." He said, "Why?" Maruti said, "We have a *tamasha* group". He said, "Who are they?" Maruti said, "From our village. Rahu Indurikar's son". So he asked, "What does he play?" Maruti replied, "The *songadya*". So I said, "Don't you remember? At Shidba's. I sang that *gavlana*". So he said to Maruti, "This fellow's clever". And even as he finished saying this, he began to write. I watched him spellbound. I saw him write the lines and I said to Maruti, "This man is terribly clever. Here he's talking to us and writing down every word and without a single mistake". So Maruti, he says, "The man's a Brahmin. Can't go wrong". So I added that *vag* to my stock.

V.T.: *You told us that when Maruti died, you began all over again.*

D.I.: Yes. The troupe's name was *Dadu Maruti Indurikar's tamasha*. I had our village group: Dhondibha, Baburao and there were the girl-dancers.

V.T.: *From where?*

D.I.: One was from Sholapur; the other from Kawata.

V.T.: *Married?*

D.I.: No. We had these two and then a group of eight.

V.T.: *This was in which year?*

D.I.: 1948. Maruti died and we began all over again after six months.

V.T.: *What did you do those six months?*

D.I.: Stayed at home. Wept most of the time. Then that Kisan Kusgaokar said, "If you love him, don't weep. Start afresh".

V.T.: *But in that intervening period how could your group manage?*

D.I.: We all went back to the village. We had homes. We had brothers.

V.T.: *You had land?*

D.I.: Yes. But a *tamasgir* knows his *tamasha*. He knows nothing about what to grow on a piece of land.

V.T.: *So you started after this break of six months?*

D.I.: Yes.

V.T.: *Did you begin earning more than you did before?*

D.I.: Yes.

V.T.: *But prices had begun to rise by then?*

D.I.: Yes, they had.

V.T.: *But what was your income on an average?*

D.I.: In Poona thirteen rupees a day for one *bari*. And when we went to Nasik, sixteen rupees.

V.T.: *Sixteen for the entire group?*

D.I.: Yes. Only on that condition did we go to Nasik.

V.T.: *That included food?*

D.I.: Yes. And the extra we got during the performance—*Daulatjada*. That was what they called an addition. We had Uma Chandurikar's brother Bapu and Chandra the dancer. In 1949 we came to Bombay—not at Bangdiwala's. But at that corner near the *vad*.

V.T.: *Where?*

D.I.: Near De Lisle Road. We went along with Bhau Bapu Narayan Gaokar. And that was a good influence on us. His method of singing was excellent. Savlaram's method was the same. The *vag*, the *charan*.

V.T.: *In what way was it different from your style?*

D.I.: They were better singers. We were nowhere near them. As for me, people enjoyed my brand of humour.

V.T.: *What did you learn from them? How to project the voice?*
D.I.: Partly that. But also the whole way of saying something.
V.T.: *Can you explain what you mean?*
D.I.: Our projection of voice or of words was not so strong. People liked my humour. I used to do the second *bari*.
V.T.: *And what did the last *bari* do?*
D.I.: Oh, they had the *vag* on Harischandra, or Savitri or Simhagad. We didn't have such a strong treasure of *vags*. We went along with them for six months.
V.T.: *This Bangdiwala Theatre you refer to, where is it?*
D.I.: Nothing remains.
V.T.: *It was in Bombay?*
D.I.: Those days there were thirteen or fourteen theatres. There used to be twenty-five groups here at one time.
V.T.: *Anywhere near Bhangwadi Theatre?*
D.I.: No. Near the Musafir Khana at Crawford Market.
V.T.: *Nothing there now?*
D.I.: Nothing. Shankar Shevnekar joined me in 1950. And others came to me, too.
V.T.: *Before that what were they? Tamasha artists?*
D.I.: Yes, they had their own groups. Then they joined us after their group broke up.
V.T.: *Why did their groups break up?*
D.I.: They had money problems. The *songadya* would go away or the dancer would join another group or the singer would find some other employment or sometimes they didn't get paid regularly.
V.T.: *This happens often?*
D.I.: Yes, yes. It goes on all the time. Even now. In 1953 I was with Baburao Punekar's group. My own group had broken up.
V.T.: *Why?*
D.I.: Because the younger Dadu Indurikar was not as firm in his support as Maruti was.
V.T.: *Was he related to you?*
D.I.: Yes, he was Maruti's younger brother. My cousin. He learnt everything in my group. Then he wanted to start off on his own. So he left. I disbanded the group. I mortgaged Ravji's trunk. Gave each of them ten rupees and joined Baburao Punekar. I think that was in 1953 or 1954. And the best part of it was that I learnt historical *vags* there. For instance, *Malharrao Holkar*, *Bolki Pagdi*, *Jaising Rathod*. I learnt a lot: Use humour only at an appropriate moment. There's a murder, or a funeral... then that's not the moment to make people laugh. Never let them laugh when there's sorrow in a sequence. I learnt this through my own experience, when I was working with him. I was with him for two years.
V.T.: *Did you have rehearsals?*
D.I.: No.
V.T.: *Then?*
D.I.: No rehearsals. He would just explain the situation.
V.T.: *That is?*

D.I.: He used to say, "We are going to do this *vag* tonight". I didn't have any proper rehearsals—not even once.
V.T.: *But surely you must have seen him do the Malharrao *vag* before?*
D.I.: I used to act in it even before I saw it!
V.T.: *You mean you began to act in it before you ever saw a performance?*
D.I.: Yes. For instance, we are going to Lalbaug from here. Say by taxi, or we're pushing a cart, or walking. I used to feel my way.... He didn't rehearse me, not even once.
V.T.: *What did he tell you?*
D.I.: Nothing. "Get into your costume".
V.T.: *Then?*
D.I.: I wore the costume.
V.T.: *After that?*
D.I.: He says, "I'll speak this and you reply thus. If I say the other thing, answer me in another way". I used to keep it in mind, remember it all.
V.T.: *Which role did you play?*
D.I.: Mohan Singh. Once I did the part, I could go on. No problem.
V.T.: *But all you knew was what exactly to answer in reply to his words. And he would answer you in the same spirit. So it was just playing it by the ear. But suppose you didn't get the words right, did he manage to keep it all going?*
D.I.: Yes, yes. He would look after that and I would alter my words in the same spirit. It was all a kind of instinct that told us how to manage things that way.
V.T.: *He would tell you what scenes there were in your *vag*.*
D.I.: Not necessarily. He would say to someone else, "Tell him". So I used to listen to it all, told as a story. That's a habit with all of us. Get up in the morning and decide, "Tonight we will do *Harishchandra*". He would say, "You be *Harishchandra*". Then, "Taramati, Rohidas... Dhondya Mahar and Vishwamitra... you". Once you heard the story, you did the *vag*. This was our level of intelligence.
V.T.: *But it's quite high!*
D.I.: For two years there wasn't a single rehearsal and we went through the show. And I remembered every one of the *vags* and when I had my own group, we enacted them.
V.T.: *Now tell us how you got those *vags* ready?*
D.I.: In story form.
V.T.: *But who prepared them?*
D.I.: The writer, of course.
V.T.: *All the ones you mentioned are old?*
D.I.: Yes. Very old.
V.T.: *Did Punekar stage old ones or did he prepare these?*
D.I.: He got them ready. Read the story, then wrote out the narrative.
V.T.: *Did he write it out? Or did he have a printed copy?*
D.I.: He had it all written out.
V.T.: *Now this *vag* of yours, Gadvache Lagna (*The Donkey's Marriage*), it's an old narrative?*
D.I.: Yes. It's in a Navnath book. The story, I mean.

V.T.: *What's in the original story?*

D.I.: The original story. The *apsaras* are dancing in the court of Indra. The *gandharva* Chitrasen is pleased by the dance. And in his excitement he sends out flies at them. They bite these *apsaras* and they stop dancing. They say nothing to Indra. But Indra says to them, "Why did you stop dancing so suddenly?" They say, "Indra, God of our Gods, we were dancing to please you and some one set flies on us. They keep on biting us. So we can't dance any more". Indra was furious. He cursed the individual who had spoilt his fun. "May he be born a donkey among mortals!" Then the *gandharva* falls at Indra's feet. He says, "O God! I was carried away by my emotions. Don't set such a harsh curse on me. Find me a way of redeeming the curse". But Indra refuses to show him any mercy. Then Brihaspati intervenes and says, "Indra, I love this *gandharva*. You cursed him because he was in the wrong. But find some way of redeeming him. He can be a donkey by day and a man at night". They agree to this. The *gandharva* will marry Satyavati, the daughter of King Satyavarma of Tulanagri. A son will be born to them. And once the *gandharva* sees the face of the son, he will be redeemed. This is, in short, the plot of the story. We had our own versions: Holding her hand, and not the son being born. Or two women.

V.T.: *Then?*

D.I.: Sometimes we shortened it. Vadgaokar told me the plot of this story. I retained it *chhap* to *chhap*.

V.T.: *What does chhap mean?*

D.I.: What the writer writes, we call *chhap*. What I told you about Patthe Bapurao writing for us, is *chhap*. Vadgaokar wrote it out for us. How Chitrasen Gandharva was redeemed and the king was pleased. His daughter had such a wonderful husband! We mentioned our guru's name and then it ended. This is what is meant by *chhap*.

V.T.: *So before you began with Gadvache Lagna, Punekar told you how to do all those old vags. Then you formed your own group. And you performed the vags you had learnt there. When did you start with Gadvache Lagna?*

D.I.: From the very beginning. From 1940.

V.T.: *And when did you start your own group?*

D.I.: In 1955. From 1958 to 1962 the *Tamasha Mandal* of Dadu Maruti Indurikar and Shankar Shevnekar won eight of the first or second prizes in the State competitions. I have those certificates. In 1962, the competitions were stopped.

V.T.: *How many performances of Gadvache Lagna had you performed till then?*

D.I.: Thousands. Formerly we used to get our public—you know how? Find a potter, give him a rupee or two and get his donkey! Promise to allow three or four of his chaps to come and watch the *tamasha* free. Then tie all the wedding adornments round the donkey's ears, spread a *jari* piece over his back, and make him walk round the whole area to the accompaniment of a *shehnai*. Today is the day—*The Donkey's Wedding*. And people would flock to watch the show.

V.T.: *Now you employed this device. Did others do similar things?*

D.I.: Oh, yes. They tied those adornments round the donkey's ears.

V.T.: *In your case it was appropriate. The show was about a donkey's wedding. But if they were going to present Malharrao Holkar?*

D.I.: No, then you couldn't do it our way. But for our show it was the right kind of advertisement. An actual donkey walking from door to door! Then fix a tent, put up boards. That was enough. The people would know that a *tamasha* group had arrived. They used to be pleased. That's the only form of entertainment in the villages. And there's dance in a *tamasha*. If a show is good, then crowds flock to see it. Which kind of show would you call good? One which has a lot of stuff in it, where you can laugh and yet learn something. Then people come. In the districts of Ahmednagar, Nasik, Satara—everywhere. Once there was an *urus* in Poona. We played in the open. The *patil* of the village was invited. He said, "There'll be women today. Don't use bad language". But he didn't have to tell me. I never used bad language on the stage.

V.T.: *When you played in villages, what ticket rates did you have?*

D.I.: When?

V.T.: *From 1962 onwards.*

D.I.: From 1962 we charged thirty-seven *naye paise*. That's six annas.

V.T.: *The same rates for all? On what basis did you fix six annas?*

D.I.: Formerly we had two anna tickets in Bombay. Then we raised them to four after 1940.

V.T.: *You mean the ticket rates were lower in Bombay?*

D.I.: Yes, outside Bombay they were higher.

V.T.: *What was the point of fixing rates higher in the villages?*

D.I.: No particular calculation. People never got a chance to see a *tamasha*. So...

V.T.: *So they came to see the show, paying slightly higher ticket rates.*

D.I.: Now we charge a rupee.

V.T.: *Even in the villages?*

D.I.: Yes. One rupee for one person. It began in 1970. Those who had never toured the villages before and were going there for the first time have now become very rich. They have cars—Mercedes cars.

V.T.: *You mean tamasha artists?*

D.I.: Yes.

V.T.: *Mercedes cars?*

D.I.: Yes.

V.T.: *Where did they earn so much money? How much does one show fetch them?*

D.I.: The tent they fix is big. Ten thousand people can watch the show.

V.T.: *The tent is their own property?*

D.I.: Yes, it belongs to them and when a *yatra* is on, they fix it.

V.T.: *Ten thousand sit in a tent and watch?*

D.I.: Yes, like in a circus.

V.T.: *So they can earn about eight or nine thousand rupees?*

D.I.: Now this year itself in the drought-affected areas we earned more than we had ever earned before.

V.T.: *One rupee ticket rates?*

D.I.: Yes. One rupee tickets.

V.T.: *In the drought-affected areas?*
D.I.: Yes, you could earn ten thousand a show. Just one night.
V.T.: *Did the artists get good money?*
D.I.: Not always. They would give them say two or three thousand.
V.T.: *But was the payment based on payment for each performance?*
D.I.: Nothing of the sort.
V.T.: *Then how did they calculate the amount?*
D.I.: They used to get an advance. And till all that money was repaid, the artist couldn't leave the group.
V.T.: *And the advance was cut from the pay?*
D.I.: Yes.
V.T.: *And what was the pay?*
D.I.: Say ten rupees per performance. Sometimes a little more.
V.T.: *So on an average how much would it work out to?*
D.I.: In festival time to five thousand. The money was not given to the artist but sent to his family. That's the custom with us. Our artists have all kinds of habits. They want rich food; fish or mutton. They want other things too. And we tour seven months in a year. The rest of the time the artist must sit at home doing nothing. Then back to the owner. Because he's down and out by then. He will ask for an advance, say of three or four thousand rupees. And sign a receipt.
V.T.: *But otherwise the earning is say ten rupees a night?*
D.I.: Yes, ten rupees.
V.T.: *For everyone? Even for the man who plays the dholak?*
D.I.: Yes, yes.
V.T.: *The dancer? How much would she earn?*
D.I.: Depends. Sometimes fifteen, sometimes twenty.
V.T.: *But when there's no show on?*
D.I.: If there's a break, there'll be no payment. That's all decided. Part of the contract.
V.T.: *What happens in the rainy season?*
D.I.: You sit at home. Money's short. All of us have families. They have to be fed. So go back to the owner and ask for an advance.
V.T.: *Formerly we used to be told that the members of a group came from the same family? Is it the same now?*
D.I.: Not so now.
V.T.: *You mean you don't have some of your family members in the group?*
D.I.: It used to be like that in Bhau Mang's *tamasha*. But not in ours. After Shankar Shevnekar left us, I haven't a single artist from the old group left with me. The show, *Gadvache Lagna*, still draws good houses. The group hasn't gone to pieces because the old members left us. You know what people say when this happens. "Nothing in that show now. The *songadya* has left the group. Not much to see now. No force in it".
V.T.: *Who are the most important characters in the group?*
D.I.: The *sardar*, the *songadya*, the dancer, the girl-dancer, and the *dholak* player.
V.T.: *The sardar is known for his humour?*
D.I.: No. He is the hero. Then the *songadya* and the girl-dancer.

V.T.: *You mean the sardar is more important than the songadya?*
D.I.: Yes, the *sardar* is the one with the brains. The *songadya* is lower in the scale.
V.T.: *The sardar doesn't sing?*
D.I.: He can, if he is gifted by fate with a talent for music.
V.T.: *After him the girl-dancer?*
D.I.: Yes.
V.T.: *Then the dholak player?*
D.I.: Either the player who plays the *dholak* or the *halgi*. Then there's the man who plays the harmonium, then the villain and so on. Nagarkar's *tamasha* group once had fifty members in it. And when Nagarkar entered, there used to be a terrific round of applause. And when the villain Ganpat appeared, there used to be another round of applause. For two *songadyas*, two rounds of applause. Those girl-dancers they had so much 'power', they were applauded. Even the *dholak* player used to be welcomed in the same way. But this was not so with all the other *tamasha* artists. There only the *songadya* got a round of applause. There was a time when Nagarkar's *tamasha* really flourished.
V.T.: *And in your case?*
D.I.: The same. When I entered, there used to be a lot of applause. Before I made my entry, Maruti used to get his share of the applause. In Bombay people knew him better. He used to dance. And I used to sing the *gavhana*. Vadgaokar's music and words. A very old one. I used to sing it even in my school days.
V.T.: *At the start you said you learnt one important thing in your childhood. The songadya must make people laugh; he musn't laugh himself. He must appear sober, serious. What other characteristics must this actor acquire? Specially the songadya in the tamasha.*
D.I.: First, his humour must bring him laughs. If he can also play the *dhol*, so much the better. If he can play the harmonium, that's an advantage too. And if he can dance—like a girl—that is also a kind of added qualification. Only Savla in Bhau Mang's group and Shamrao Palegaonkar could manage all this. They could act the *sardar*, and the *songadya*, play the *halgi*, the *dholak*, the harmonium, the *tabla* and even dance. It's rare. And they were the best in Maharashtra. Savla is in Poona.
V.T.: *And Shamrao?*
D.I.: He is in Satara. They're old now. But the point is they are still in the *tamasha*. One man acting for ten hours at a stretch. That's something rare.
V.T.: *When you designed your role in Gadvache Lagna, how did you set about it?*
D.I.: I didn't do it the way you mean. I used to watch those *tamasha* troupes that came to our village. Dashrath Dehu, Lehu Thankar used to come from the Aryabhusana Theatre of Poona. Vadgaokar was my father's disciple. Those two dancers too. I was impressed by their performance. When they did *Gadvache Lagna* in my village, I was seven years old.
V.T.: *In what way is your current presentation different from theirs?*
D.I.: The difference—well, those days there used to be a lot of obscene jokes. I dropped all that. Because I saw that women used to come and watch

the show. I felt that we ought to present shows where the women in our families could come and watch us. And I felt we ought not to include jokes that they might dislike. Once eight years ago, Khedekar's *tamasha* was on in a village. The *patil* there and Narayan came to Chandrakant and said, "Must have your *tamasha*. It's as good as theirs".

V.T.: *Who is this Chandrakant?*

D.I.: Dhavalpurkar. He said, "Your *tamasha* is as good as theirs". Chandrakant said, "I'm going to Supari". So the *pehalwan* asked an old woman, "Which *tamasha* should we take?" She said, "If you want a good *tamasha*, take Indurkar's. The rest won't be of any use. You can have Bhau Mang's or Khedekar's, but this Indurkar's is very good". Now this *pehalwan* came looking for me. Said he wanted the *tamasha*. We said, "We want a hundred rupees. We won't let you down. You will get your money's worth". We went and nobody would offer us a drop of water. We didn't have a car. We had a generator. They wouldn't give us a drop of water because we had come in a hired car.

V.T.: *Which year?*

D.I.: 1969. We came here in 1970.

V.T.: *What do you mean when you say they didn't offer you a drop of water?*

D.I.: That's the custom. When the artists reach a place, the people offer them water. That was a small village. But they thought we were an inferior troupe.

V.T.: *They must have known you?*

D.I.: Who they? No. I hadn't performed there before. This was Durga. Kathyacha Durga, near Poona. So they didn't offer us water. There was a disciple of my father there. The same caste. He asked us, "Where do you come from?" "From Rahu Indurkar", we said. He said, "Go ahead. We'll get these fellows on their knees before long. Feel no concern at all for artists. All the time it is Tukaram Khedekar".

V.T.: *Tukaram Khedekar, does he belong to your caste?*

D.I.: No. He is a Maratha.

V.T.: *You mean there are such caste considerations in the tamasha? The Maratha is believed to be superior?*

D.I.: Yes, it used to be so. Not so much now.

V.T.: *Which other Maratha artists were there in addition to Tukaram Khedekar?*

D.I.: Dattoba Tambe. His father was a *tamasgir*. Now my father's disciple in this village, he said to me, "Go on. Perform. Show them. These Marathas are not at all concerned about us. All they want is Khedekar". Now I liked my drink. But that day I didn't touch a drop. These people didn't offer us food, no tea either. Not even *pan*. They thought ours was an inferior show and their money would be wasted on us. I guessed that this was how their minds worked. I didn't sleep, didn't eat. I was just pining for the *tamasha* to begin. I got after that *pehalwan*. "Let's start soon". Before dawn. The *vag* must be over before sunrise. I got after him. He couldn't understand why I was so impatient. My father's disciple—he got things ready for the show. And I started off. "Other groups have come and sung their *gavlanas* here. We respect them all. You come and watch us, pay what you can. We are here on account of our forefathers' blessings and to serve you". I started off:

gan gavhana. I made them laugh. They said it was a wonderful beginning. Then I started on the *vag* itself: *Malharrao Holkar* by Baburao Punekar. But before that I addressed the audience again. I said, "You haven't offered us water. Maybe you don't have it. We can always go to the river. But the way you treated us, it has made us all sad. You think our *tamasha* is inferior. In a school you have boys who are clever, but the parents are poor and don't have money to buy them books..." Then I said to them, "Tukaram Gadkari comes here. He's popular with you. But he worked under me at Bangdiwala Theatre. Madhu Nagarkar started off after I did. Datta Patil—Master Ururekar made a *tamasgir* out of him."

V.T.: *Datta Patil?*

D.I.: Yes, they all entered the field after me. I belong to Bhau Mang's, Dagdoba Salvi's generation—their category. I mentioned other *tamasgirs* in my speech. And then I said to them, "If you like the show, pay for it. If you don't like it, we'll go back home empty-handed." We began the *vag*, *Malharrao Holkar*, and those who normally went to work in the fields at six in the morning stayed on till eight to watch it.

V.T.: *When did you begin?*

D.I.: At midnight.

V.T.: *The vag?*

D.I.: No, the whole show. *Gan, gavhana, rangbaji*.

V.T.: *And the vag?*

D.I.: At three in the morning.

V.T.: *So the vag went on for five hours?*

D.I.: About four and a half hours. But I did it with so much spirit that the *pehalwan* came and thumped my back. "The whole night there was just Dadu before us. We didn't remember that Tukaram Gadkari existed". I said, "For your *hazeri* I'll have one *vag*".

V.T.: *What does hazeri mean?*

D.I.: It means "during the day". Have the first *vag* from nine to twelve.

V.T.: *Tell us about this system.*

D.I.: See, we began at twelve and went on till eight in the morning. Then we had a wash, we drank tea and started off again at nine.

V.T.: *This is the regular thing?*

D.I.: Yes, in the villages.

V.T.: *Even now?*

D.I.: Yes, even today.

V.T.: *Then how do they go to work, if they're working in the nearby factories?*

D.I.: They take the day off. To watch a *tamasha* those people stayed away from their job.

V.T.: *And you had the hazeri?*

D.I.: I started on the *hazeri vag* and won their respect. "Tomorrow is Saturday. I'll perform free for you. The women must sit in front, the men at the back. And our artists must consider that their mothers, sisters, wives, daughters are all before them. So they must think a little and not use any kind of language. We have *Ranicha vag*. It is Patthe Bapurao's work. And it is meant for women. So the women must sit in front. That's my request to you". They applauded me. We received five hundred rupees. And I did the other *vag*. Began at ten at night and

finished at five in the morning. The women paid one rupee each... three hundred rupees in all. They liked it so much.

V.T.: Now you do *Gadvache Lagna in Bombay*. Is our audience very different from the one you get in the villages? Do you present your show here exactly the way you do it there? I don't mean that you do it in the open there and in a closed theatre here. I mean in relation to the audience... Say in Poona—at the *Bal Gandharva* you have an urban audience. In a village it's a different kind of audience. So do you change your style?

D.I.: No.

V.T.: Not even in the dialogue?

D.I.: No. Just the same.

V.T.: And the duration? They say you go on for five hours at a stretch in villages.

D.I.: Now you see if there's *tamasha* on at the time of a fair, you present two *vags*; in the case of a *lavani* you repeat the lines. But you make sure that you don't bore the audience! Now for the State competitions, I read the rules carefully. Five marks for the *dholak* player, five for the *halgi* player, five for the *tal* player; and five for the *tuntuna* player. That makes it twenty. And fifteen for the girl's *ada*.

V.T.: How much does that make? Thirty-five.

D.I.: Fifteen marks for minor roles and that makes it fifty. Fifteen for the *songadya*. That makes it?

V.T.: Sixty-five.

D.I.: Fifteen marks for the response, fifteen for the plot. I studied this break-up of marks. So I got a clock and began rehearsing. Now our *Malharrao Holkar* lasts three hours. How to fit in the *gan*, *gavlana*, *rangbaji* and the *vag* into just two hours?

V.T.: Less than two hours?

D.I.: Yes. The *vag* lasts three hours. *Gan*, *gavlana*... that takes one hour. *Rangbaji* for one hour and a half. It used to go on for more than five hours. We had to shorten it to less than two hours. I worked out a system. Nobody taught me... I would say Bapurao's first line in my mind. Shall I sing the rest?

V.T.: Do.

D.I.: I used to carry on, sing one stanza, then end the *gan*. Then I used to go on to the *gavlana*. Krishna's *gavlana*. End on a note from Pathe Bapurao. All over in fifteen minutes. That left me one hour and a half for the *vag*. I used to time it well. Everything had to go like clock-work. I decided that the *halgi* player mustn't stay too near the mike. If he did that, our words wouldn't carry. So the *dholak* and the *halgi* were shifted behind and had to play in a strictly disciplined manner. And thus we used to reduce the sequence to one hour and a half. Finish it just a little before. Then the curtain, leaving two minutes for my *Vaikunthicha ala raya Vithal* and the final bow before the spectators. From 1958 to 1962 I used to win all the prizes—the *halgi* prize, the *dholak* prize, the award for the *songadya*. Five prizes. You know how? Tatyasaheb told me, "When you do an exam, you have to put down your pen after the bell goes and hand in your answer paper. You can't say I want to write a little more. It's the same here".

V.T.: In the villages, do you perform without mikes? You say there are now ten thousand watching a *tamasha*? How can the voice reach them?

D.I.: Formerly it was quite different. Once a *tamasha* began, you didn't even whisper to your neighbour. Not a cough. We used to carry iron rods and tie rags at one end, dip them in kerosene and light them. Keep them burning on both sides of the stage.

V.T.: Till which year?

D.I.: 1938. We went on till 1943 the same way. Burn kerosene, light those rags, call the people... Earn a few rupees and a meal. Then start off in the afternoon for the next village. You see people loved the *tamasha* then. There was no other form of entertainment.

V.T.: But now you can't do without a mike.

D.I.: Naturally, the villagers know all about mikes.

V.T.: You use them?

D.I.: Of course. What else can you do? Your voice doesn't reach the back row and they shout, "Can't hear. Speak loudly". Then you shout louder. You think it's all a bit crude?

V.T.: And now they listen to film music. Do they make you sing film songs?

D.I.: They do. They'll bring out two annas and say, "Sing *Bugdi mazi sandli*." Formerly they used to ask us to sing a *bhedik* or some devotional piece. There's one by Vadgaokar. Our village womenfolk used to like it a lot. Really lovely lines. I used to sing this in Bombay. I knew many *lavanis* by heart. I think I have forgotten most of them; I feel the break.

V.T.: We had come upto 1969. Then you began again and you have gone on with the *tamasha* right till today.

D.I.: Yes. I came here right away.

V.T.: How?

D.I.: Our well-known comedian Shankar Ghanekar told Madhukarrao Nerale of Hanuman Theatre, "Get that Dadu Indurkar".

V.T.: But Nerale must have seen you on the stage before?

D.I.: Sure. Right from the time the Hanuman Theatre was built. I used to bring my group here.

V.T.: Then you stayed here right till now?

D.I.: Yes. Three years. Doing *Gadvache Lagna*. I had stopped the show for two months. They wrote to me asking me to come back. I said to myself, "I am poor. I am an artist but my art is hardly valued. I must learn to be humble". So I came back.

V.T.: You were talking about those girl-dancers? Do they have someone in the family acting in a *tamasha* troupe? Is that how they enter the profession? And what happens when they stop dancing? What do they do to earn a livelihood then?

D.I.: Then they find a man, get married.

V.T.: But what happens to a girl in the later part of her life?

D.I.: She becomes someone's keep. Who drives the girls to this? The owner? Nobody bothers about what will happen to them when they are old. The owner thinks of his own pleasures. Once he has finished with one woman, he runs after another.

V.T.: When would you say they are too old to act?

D.I.: Forty, forty-five.

V.T.: *Leave aside the lot of the girls you mentioned just now, what happens to the rest?*

D.I.: They go out during the day to clean vessels, wash clothes.

V.T.: *These tamasha women?*

D.I.: Yes. There's Baya Salunka who used to be in our troupe. I got her an honorarium of three hundred rupees because she had nobody to support her. It's alright when you are young. The girls begin working with a troupe, they start dancing when they are twelve or thirteen. But nobody cares once they are old.

V.T.: *When is a dancer considered 'old'? When is she 'out' of the profession?*

D.I.: When she hardly gets a rupee, or four annas as *nazar*. She has to stay at home then.

V.T.: *When does this happen?*

D.I.: When she is about forty. But if she has a slender build, she can go on till she is fifty.

V.T.: *But the one you mentioned?*

D.I.: She is forty. There is a small village Walvada. Her father used to live there. She came to us when she was seven or eight. We taught her to dance. She used to dance beautifully. People used to say, "No *tamasha* like Dadu Marut Indurkar's".

V.T.: *Then what happened?*

D.I.: As she got older, she got a lot of 'publicity'. Her father took her from one troupe to another. And the troupe would flourish. She is a grandmother now. But even now she has so much appeal. Those days one tilt and the audience responded! It can happen to anyone. Once you are old, no one has any use for you. But not in her case. People still want her. They like that 'action' of hers.

V.T.: *You said if a woman is 'out', she has to find any kind of work, even manual work.*

D.I.: What else is she to do? If she finds a protector when she is in her prime, then things work out well for her. Otherwise there's just misery in store for her. This has been my experience these last thirty-three years. In our line, honesty is rare—both among men and women. Cheating is common.

V.T.: *Won't things improve?*

D.I.: I don't know. But I would like them to.

V.T.: *You went through a hard period, didn't you?*

D.I.: Yes, in 1967.

V.T.: *They say you cleaned vessels?*

D.I.: Yes. My wife used to work as a servant in a Parsi family. She earned fifty rupees a month.

V.T.: *And you?*

D.I.: I helped her. We got two meals a day and her pay. The children were with her parents. The Parsi employer asked me what I did. I said, "*Tamasha*". He asked me what that meant. I replied, "Drama".

V.T.: *Didn't you invite your employers to your show?*

D.I.: No, they weren't interested.

V.T.: *You worked in their house, helping your wife with the household work? For six months?*

D.I.: Yes. But I told you I did so because I was in difficulties. They burnt down our tent and I lost everything.

V.T.: *Where did this happen?*

D.I.: We were at Khandoba's in the Satara district. The fair there is attended by the Mangs and Ramoshis.

V.T.: *This is not the Khandoba of Jejuri?*

D.I.: No. This fair is Khandoba's fair at Pali. Mangs, Ramoshis, thieves throng there. They propitiate Khandoba, entreat his blessings for the robberies they plan to undertake. And if they are successful, they come for the thanksgiving on Khandoba's wedding day.

V.T.: *Still?*

D.I.: Yes, even now.

V.T.: *Who burnt down your tent?*

D.I.: My rivals.

V.T.: *You suffered heavy losses?*

D.I.: Yes, about twenty thousand rupees.

V.T.: *What was damaged?*

D.I.: The generator worth about five thousand. Our new tent which had cost us about seven thousand. I had about three thousand rupees in the trunk. And our costumes and properties. They wanted to smash the vehicle. But I stood before it and howled out loudly.

V.T.: *When did it all begin?*

D.I.: During the performance itself.

V.T.: *But it was your crowd that came to watch the show.*

D.I.: They were spectators who came to watch my show because they were told it was good. There was a huge crowd. And a boy came and removed a wire.

V.T.: *While the show was on?*

D.I.: Yes. I was on the stage. I saw it happen. The amplifier failed and the people began to shout, *Avaz, avaz*. We tried to explain. But it was no use. I was behind the boy. I asked him, "Why did you do it?"

V.T.: *Then?*

D.I.: The people got up and broke the door, smashed the glass, pulled down the tent. We were forty. The crowd numbered two thousand.

V.T.: *Was anyone injured?*

D.I.: Yes, my uncle was hit by a stone. He bled. The rest of our artists fled.

V.T.: *And the girl?*

D.I.: Shankarraro Shevnekar quietly led her aside and took her to safety.

V.T.: *But do people really behave like this if the actors aren't heard properly?*

D.I.: Oh, yes. They did the same thing to Bhau Mang.

V.T.: *But is it all done on purpose?*

D.I.: Yes. I saw the boy start it. My rivals had their people among the spectators.

V.T.: *You say they did the same to Bhau Mang?*

D.I.: They even burnt their vehicles—Kolhapurkar's, even Tukaram Khedekar's.

V.T.: *Do the contractors engineer the trouble? Or your rivals?*

D.I.: They are all there. And members of the public, too. They can't bear to see someone else succeed.

V.T.: *Didn't the police come to your rescue? Stop this skirmish? Wasn't there any inquiry?*

D.I.: No. Nothing.

V.T.: *Didn't you lodge a complaint?*

D.I.: The local people threatened me. They told me to be more sensible and

not try anything of the sort. So I got into our vehicle and we drove to Poona. The owner there helped us.

V.T.: You mentioned that you are a mahar. When you are on tour, you stay in a village. Do people behave differently because you are a mahar?

D.I.: Formerly they did. Not any more. Baburao Punekar is a Maratha. He would stay with the village *patil*. I lived in the *maharwada*.

V.T.: Did you face a lot of difficulties during the drought?

D.I.: Well in Marathwada people love the *tamasha*. They come in bullock carts; women, children, the whole lot. They eat their *bhakri* outside the tent. They enjoy every minute of the performance. They get to see it just once a year. There's no other form of entertainment.

V.T.: The cinema?

D.I.: They prefer the *tamasha*.

V.T.: But film music?

D.I.: Yes, they listen to the film records. If they like a particular song, they ask us to sing it.

V.T.: You incurred a loss of twenty-seven thousand after your tent was burnt down?

D.I.: Yes. I paid off my debts. I have yet to settle a debt of five thousand. I must think of my children. My daughter wants to become a nurse. The younger daughter is in the sixth; my son is in the fifth. My youngest is four years old.

V.T.: Would you like them to be *tamasgirs*?

D.I.: No. I would like to educate them.



Music and the Dance

T. Balasaraswati

(Presidential Address delivered at the Forty-Seventh Annual Conference of The Music Academy, Madras)

It is with mixed feelings of pride and humility that I have accepted the high honour bestowed upon me by the Music Academy, Madras in asking me to preside over their forty-seventh annual conference. My pride is in our South Indian traditions of music and dance and in my family's special heritage within these traditions; my humility stems from my awareness of my role as an individual artist within these great traditions, and from my debt of gratitude to all those who have helped me in my life-long dedication to the twin arts of music and dance—my family, my gurus, my friends and critics, and the public that has come to pay homage to these arts, to appreciate and understand them, not only throughout India, but, in recent years, also in other parts of the world. I have been asked to preside over a conference which has, in the past, been presided over largely by musicians,

and I feel that by doing so the paramount importance of music in South Indian dance has been rightly emphasised. Bharata Natyam, in the highest moments, may be considered the embodiment of sound in visual form, a ceremony, and an act of devotion. For more than two thousand years the *shastras* have confirmed that an individual dedicated to the dance must be equally dedicated to music, must receive thorough training in both the arts, as well as in all possible aspects of human life, traditionally classified as the sixty-four arts. Through this intensive education, the artist should be imbued with a deep understanding of the sources from which they stem. I am speaking of spirit and emotion, of *bhakti* and *rasa*.

To create the most perfect realization of *rasa* in a performance, all elements must be in balance. Although *tala* provides a wonderfully strong backbone, it is undoubtedly *raga-bhava* which evokes this *rasa* in all its varying shades and infinite variety. The rhythmic forms and its mould should be such as to augment the *raga-bhava*. The more the *raga-bhava*, the more does the *abhinaya* shine. We should never forget that in deriving *bhava-raga-tala* from the syllables of the word *Bha-ra-ta*, there is an underlying concept of the equality of these three elements. In the nuances in the *abhinaya*, the *raga-bhava* stands beautifully integrated, and includes the subtle expression of *gamakas*, the intonation of *shruti*, and the unfolding of improvisation in *niraval*. It is my teacher's instruction that the above-mentioned aspect should be brought out in the *abhinaya* and I hold it as my objective when doing *abhinaya*. The masters have created separately compositions especially suited for the dance. The hundreds of songs useful for music-concerts are of a different kind. Apart from these, the masters had separated the dance-music; we should inquire into their idea in doing so. Their main ideas are: (1) the *raga* and *tala* should stand inter-twined. (2) the *raga* and *bhava* should go hand in hand in *abhinaya*. (3) the *raga* and the words of the song should mingle together in the *abhinaya*. I do not have the boldness to take away the time-honoured creations of the great honoured masters of Bharatam from the dance performances. Songs suited to concert—singing afford no scope for the full creative unfolding of *abhinaya*. This is my experience. *Padas* and *pada-varnas* are indeed the jewels of dance-music. The *Bhairavi tana-varna* is the treasure of concert-music. The masters of dance have so set their creations that the sequences involving strenuous physical movements alternate with relaxed passages of *abhinaya*. Similarly between the *pada-varna* and the *tillana*, they placed *padas* for quiet *abhinaya*. *Natya-rasikas* may see this arrangement of fast and slow tempos alternating, affording a quickening and relaxation following each other. The students of dance who are to come up in the future should acquire an equal mastery of the twin arts of music and dance, understand the subtle aspects of both and abide by the underlying principles of the art as it had been developed by our ancestors over the centuries.

It was my good fortune to have been born in a family in which the traditions of music and dance have been the focus of life for generations. Although it is known to many that my grandmother's grandmother Kamakshiammal danced and sang in the Court of Tanjore, it is important to point out that my great-grandmother Sundarammal was a musician, as were my grand-

mother Dhanammal and my mother Jayammal. In fact, most of the artists of our family in recent generations have been musicians rather than dancers. Among those remembered are several violinists, and performers on the *veena*, flute, *ghatam*, and *mridangam*, as well as many singers. I feel proud to come from a family that has produced musicians of the greatness of a Vina Dhanam or a Jayammal, the quality of whose music is still remembered by many here. I may recall that my mother Jayammal was teaching vocal music at the Academy's College till her last days.

Within the family, it was Vina Dhanam, who outlined to me the repertoire of *padas* and presented their scope. She was trained in the school of both Dikshitar and Shyama Sastri and was responsible for the family's interest in these particular branches of music. My interpretation of the *padas*, then, depends on Dhanammal's interpretation of all of her music, and not just the *padas*. She set an ideal of richness and subtlety of emotional expression that shines like a lamp before those who have heard and appreciated her music.

It was my mother Jayammal who had me trained as a dancer, in spite of strong family opposition. Not only were those the days when Dance was being opposed but there was also a strong family stress on the importance of music. It was, in fact, a great musician from outside the family, Ariyakudi Ramanuja Ayyangar, who firmly supported Jayammal in her decision. Although Jayammal decided not to send me to school, she saw to it that I received all necessary training for the dance. It was she who selected Kandappa as guru, and after a severe and rigorous session of dance training from him from the early hours of the morning, she would make me sit next to her in the evening and train me in music. Kandappa was also a fine musician, and every *adavu* of his dance compositions was fitted perfectly to the *svaras*. Jayammal taught us the close relationship of *abhinaya* to *raga*—contour; she would say, "Your head, your whole body, must move with the *sangati*, with the *gamaka*, and not just with the *tala*".

Kandappa was my guru. He conveyed to me the legacy of the Tanjore quartette and he brought his own exquisite sense of balance in standardizing the Bharata Natyam repertoire and programme as I do it to-day. The initial inspiration within me to take up dancing came, however, from seeing a performance of Gauri Ammal when I was very young. If she had not brought the dance to such a stage of development, the combination of music and dance that I have attempted to realize would not have been possible. She is gone, she is missed, and I feel that a share of the honour in my being elected President of the Music Academy should rightfully go to her.

I have tried to keep myself open to learning from any one of artistic integrity and to add to and embellish the thorough training I received from my family and my guru. From traditionally trained ladies in our own family circles, I learned many things and received special help in languages, including Telugu, Sanskrit, and Tamil. One of them taught me to do an entire song with just my face: first, with the music, and then in silence. I had to go through the entire emotional range of the *sahitya*, using only facial expression, without the aid of hands or arms.

Up to a certain stage in my early career, Chinnaya Naidu taught to me the ways to develop improvisation, in *padas* as well as in other forms. He used to test me by singing short phrases with very little in the way of cues and then ask me to state which *nayika* was appropriate.

When I was already in my thirties, Kuchipudi Vedanta Lakshminarayana Shastri opened great new vistas for me, especially in *varnam*—improvisation. He once said, "If I had had a singer like your mother, with her music, I could have taken my art throughout the world". This remarkable man generously shared his immense knowledge with me, without holding anything back. In a very real sense, he gave me the confidence to attempt those things that I am doing to-day.

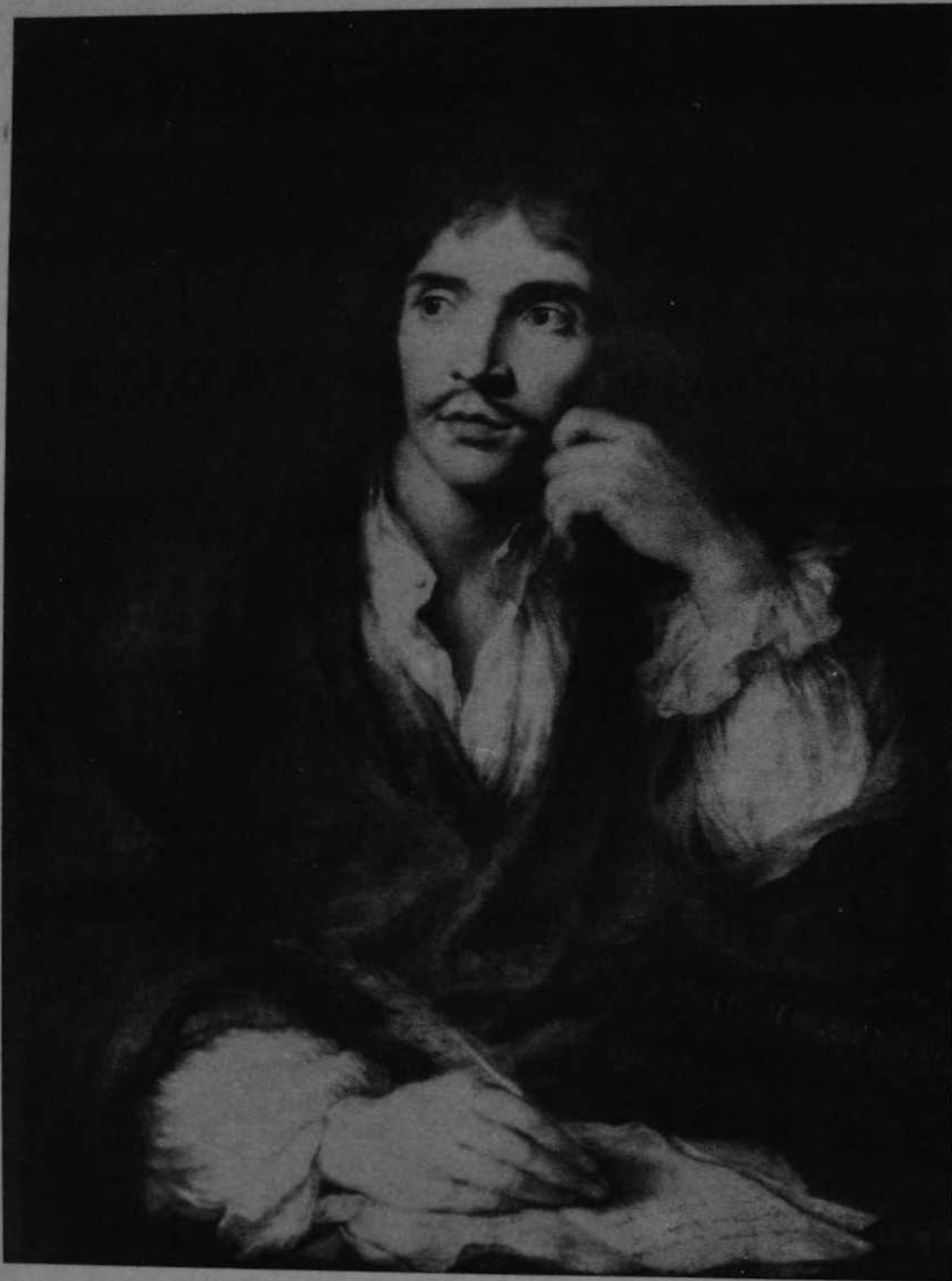
During my lifetime I have seen the art of Bharata Natyam rescued from ignominy and restored to a position of respect and world-wide interest. Those who supported me in the past often had to justify and support the whole cause of dance. I may mention Rasikamani T.K. Chidambaranatha Mudaliar, who arranged concerts, to which he brought people who had opposed Bharata Natyam, in order that they might see for themselves the greatness of our heritage. He attacked the prejudice against it in his speeches and writings, as did Kalki, writing in *Ananda Vikatan*. Tiru V. Ka had once arranged my recital at a wedding. Among the invited guests were T.K. Chidambaranatha Mudaliar and Kalki, both of whom had been opposed to Bharata Natyam and were surprised to see that it was being presented at a wedding. They were converted by the performance; they realized the sophistication and integrity of the art-form, and saw that it could be performed tastefully at a high level, providing a legitimate artistic and even spiritual experience, if approached in the proper way. In the nineteen-thirties there were many difficulties and obstacles to overcome. Subramania Chettiar and his brother Jalatarangam Ramaniah Chettiar arranged concerts and provided moral support in every way, and Uday Shankar introduced my art to northern India. I am especially grateful to Dr. V. Raghavan and the Music Academy of Madras for supporting me for more than forty years, giving me the opportunity to present my performance to a large general public, and providing a place for a school to train young dancers in my discipline of the art. Let me also not forget Kuppuswami Mudaliar, who was my *mridangam* accompanist from the very beginning, and whose tasteful drumming has contributed so much to the performance. Among early foreign supporters was the Dutch writer Beryl de Zoete. There are many others who have contributed to the interest in Bharata Natyam in India, as well as in other parts of the world, and, as a dancer, who has lived during this time of re-affirmation of an art to which I have dedicated my life, I wish to thank them with all my heart.

Out of my desire to propagate the form and style of this art taught to me by my teacher Sri Kandappa Nattuvanar, I have the privilege to dedicate my Dance School to his memory; even so do I dedicate to him the book on the art that Dr. Raghavan and I have written for the use of students, teachers and spectators. Only one thing I may stress on this occasion with your permission, as I am bound to, when I think of my teacher. To plan shortened courses and produce many musicians and dancers quickly is against the way of my teachers

and my grandmother Vina Dhanammal; it is harmful to art. The great objective is quality not quantity. The attention that is bestowed on dress and decor may be spent on actual training in the art.

It is after gaining the approbation of our country and especially of Tamilnadu, that I went abroad. In recent years it has been my good fortune to visit other parts of Asia, Europe and the United States, to perform and even to teach. I feel that only by adopting a broad outlook towards the many forms of music and dance which the human race has so far evolved, can we hope to understand the true position of Carnatic music and dance, and to see clearly in the face of many potentially disruptive forces in our cultural life its true genius, its unique artistic and spiritual achievement. I have had the opportunity to see the close relationship between music and dance all over the world, and to appreciate the myriad forms that have developed. I have come to realize that the arts of South India now have an international and world-wide importance. We must resist the temptation to mix them in inappropriate ways with other styles. We must study and experience them profoundly so that we are in contact with their deepest roots and meaning. I feel grateful to have lived in such a time as this, and to have been able to show to my compatriots, as well as to people throughout the world, the essential greatness of our South Indian traditions of music and dance.

I have indicated the great debt I owe to Jayammal and Kandappa Pillai, my family, my teachers, and to the Music Academy of Madras. My final *namaskaram* is reserved for all of you assembled here, my audience, my friends and supporters. Without your growing awareness of its greatness, the tradition of Bharata Natyam might already have died. Because of you I stand here to-day to preside over this great Conference. This honour really belongs to you the *rasikas*. The real temple of art is the heart of the *rasika*. I know that in your hearts and minds rests the future of our art. *Namaskaram*.



Molière (1622-1673)

At the Theatre with Molière

Henri Micciollo

This year the tercentenary of Molière's death is being observed all over the world. This famous author of French comedies has not ceased to live in the memory of men, nor ceased to entertain his public. Recently, in Bombay, a French troupe gave a performance of *Les Fourberies de Scapin* in French. Language barriers did not prevent a full house from sharing in the entertainment. Rare, but all the more precious, moments: Molière is not an author who writes in his office and whose works can then be academically explained; Molière can only be understood on the stage, before the floodlights, with his actors in costumes and facing the public. He devoted his entire life to the theatre, and it is there that we must go to look for him.

Born in 1622 in a well-to-do bourgeois family, Molière, at the age of twenty, broke with his milieu to venture into the world of adventure, which was the theatre. In the beginning of the seventeenth century this was considered a veritable social come-down. The actors were victims of all kinds of attacks, particularly from the Church. The *Illustre Théâtre*, founded in 1643 by a group of actors of humble origin, presented tragedies in Paris for three years. Their financial difficulties started mounting. Molière, already chief of the troupe, decided to try his luck in the provinces. The troupe remained there for twelve years, from 1646 to 1658, placed under the protection of the Prince of Conti, and later, of the Duke of Epernon. Molière took part not only in tragedies, but also in farces. Some of the latter were written by him and they were a roaring success. He found that he was now capable of facing Paris once again; he returned there in 1658 and obtained permission to present a play before the king. Thanks to the support of the king's brother, he settled down in the theatre of the Petit Bourbon. In 1660, when this theatre was demolished, he went to the Palais Royal, and remained there till his death in 1673. The fourteen seasons in Paris were years of untiring activity, incredible struggles, failures and successes. Molière carried the triple responsibility of director of the troupe, actor and playwright.

Before Molière arrived on the scene, the theatre in Paris was divided between two troupes: that of the Hotel of Bourgogne, which presented mostly tragedies and that of the Marais, which specialised in plays with stage effects. In addition, there was the Italian troupe of Scaramouche which presented farces in Italian. Molière was to create the French comedy and usher in a change in the taste of the public. But this step was to lead to bitter rivalries between actors and playwrights. The Hotel de Bourgogne quickly became hostile to Molière. Pierre Corneille and his brother Thomas were not strangers to the intrigues directed towards the newcomer. Molière retaliated by parodying such and such a verse of Corneille, ridiculing the pretensions to noble birth of Thomas. The actors and playwrights of the two troupes fought amongst themselves: Marquise du Parc left Molière's troupe for that of the Hotel of Bourgogne; Racine, whose first play

La Thébaïde was presented by Molière, also joined the rival clan. From the very beginning, Molière established himself as the leader of the troupe. He had brought together this troupe, and to him was entrusted the task of maintaining and strengthening it, of recruiting new members when one of its actors deserted or died. In spite of several changes, the troupe's striking quality was its stability: many of his players remained with Molière till the very end. When Molière settled down in Paris in 1658, his troupe consisted of ten actors: among the most well-known were Madeleine Béjart, La De Brie, La Du Parc, Joseph and Louis Béjart, Du Parc, De Brie and, of course, there was Molière himself. The troupe revolved around twelve persons, attaining a maximum of fourteen. Among the famous recruits were Jodelet, La Grange, Du Croisy, Armande Bejart and Baron. A total of twenty-two comedians must have worked at some time or other in Molière's troupe.

The leader had to make sure that his troupe earned its living: the search for success was for him an absolute necessity. The profits were shared equally; the playwright alone had the right to a double share. A repertoire had to be established; playwrights had to be found. Molière presented tragedies, tragi-comedies, comedies and farces. Every new playwright read out his play before the troupe. They discussed the play and all the problems of production. The leader of the troupe then distributed the roles, directed the rehearsals, decided on the stage-setting, costumes, masks and decor. The shows generally took place on Fridays, Sundays and Tuesdays, from four to six o'clock. During these fourteen seasons, the troupe achieved great success, but it had also to face many difficulties. The register of *La Grange* tells us that the troupe presented in all ninety-five plays by twenty-five different playwrights of which fifty-five were original creations. Let us note that of this total of ninety-five plays, thirty-one were Molière's. What strikes us with force is the very large number of plays presented. Nearly thirty plays in a single season, since at this time the theatre public was not sufficiently numerous, and a play could not be continued for long. *L'Ecole des Femmes*, which was presented seventy times, was a tremendous success. *Dom Juan* was played fifteen times. What also strikes us is the preponderance of comedy over tragedy. Molière met with repeated failure when he played in tragedies (initially he was a tragedian and persevered as much as he could in this direction), or when he presented other playwrights' works. This explains why as the seasons advanced, the repertory was reduced and became more and more concentrated. In 1670, for several months Molière's plays alone made up the entire repertory.

Added to the normal shows, were the 'visits' which were for Molière's troupe an obligation. They also brought in an additional income. The troupe gave shows at the residences of important personalities and performed specially for the king. Molière often performed for the king, at Vincennes, Fontainebleau, Versailles, Chambord, and the Tuileries. Louis XIV was greatly interested in the theatre, and liked Molière. At times he participated in the show: in *Le Mariage Forcé*, the king danced in the costume of an Egyptian. Molière created sixteen of his plays for the king and thus assured for himself relatively effective protection not only against his permanent enemies, the Hotel de Bourgogne, but also against the 'parti dévot' which

was directly inspired by the Church. But even so, they did succeed in obstructing the presentation of *Tartuffe* for three years.

Those days the leader of the troupe was also in charge of what is today called publicity. First of all, there were the speeches. At the end of the show he would thank the audience and announce the next show. He would defend himself against certain attacks and reply to certain accusations. He was also in charge of drawing up the posters, which during that period consisted of a fairly long text describing the attractions of the show. The press was not utilised for publicity but carried critical articles. Molière also tried to publicise the activities of his troupe by giving readings of his plays. He arranged private shows at the residences of important personalities (particularly of *Tartuffe* during the entire period when it was forbidden).

As an actor Molière was undoubtedly a great comedian; this was also acknowledged by his enemies. He progressively gave up tragic roles for which he had no talent. His masters on the subject of acting were the Italians, and, in particular, Scaramouche. He knew how to perfect a most natural style of acting. Contemporary observers describe him as an actor who was not content with merely reciting his lines but one who threw himself body and soul into his acting. Like other great actors after him, he succeeded in perfectly integrating his physical shortcomings into the technique of his acting. He made them pass off as a part of his art: a certain rhythm in his speech which resulted in a hiccup at the end of a verse, a cough which he could not control towards the end of his life, was passed off as a trait of the character of the comedy. Molière played the main role in a vast majority of his plays. The playwright wrote for the actor in himself: his roles were almost always great comic roles corresponding best to his own temperament. They are dynamic roles. It is not surprising that Molière took on the roles of Mascarille and Scapin. In short, using our modern jargon, Molière was also the star of the troupe he directed.

One tends to forget that Molière, the playwright, could not neglect the needs of his troupe, and, of course, the public. Molière wrote for the public, which he had to please. What kind of a public was it? The hall of the Palais Royal comprised of the galleries and the pit. In the galleries sat the Court, the nobility and the ladies. In the pit, sat the bourgeoisie, the merchants, the artisans, the soldiers and the lackeys. Two very different publics, yet both appreciated comedy and farce. But the public in the pit constituted the majority and it was their support which counted. Molière often said that his greatest claim to glory was to have made the pit laugh. The only public he scorned was the pedants, authors and critics, who spoke of rules; the only rule that Molière followed was to please the audience.

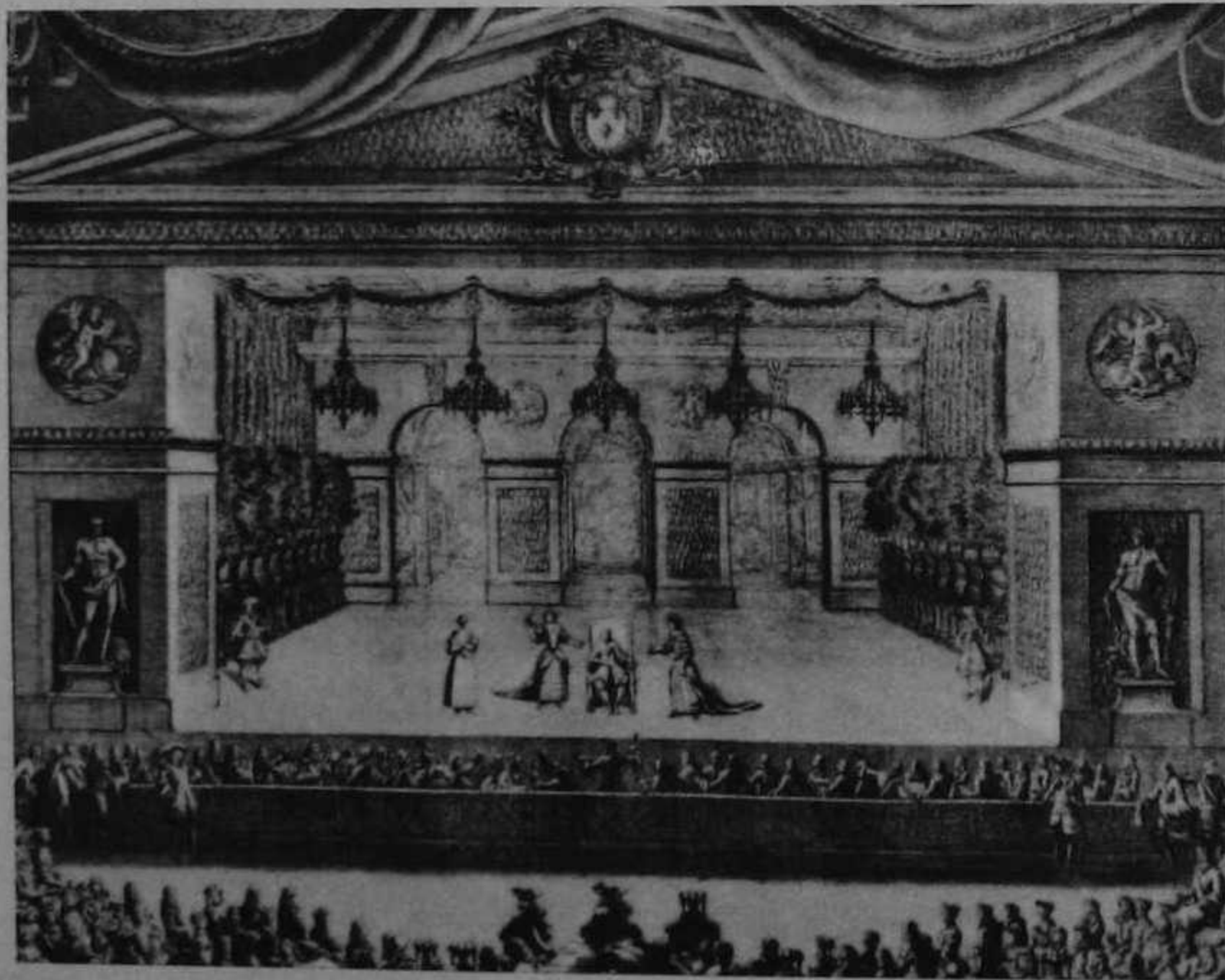
In Molière's case creation was greatly dependent on the conditions in which he was obliged to work; these conditions demanded frantic activity. The playwright was at the disposal of the king, and the king could not be kept waiting. *Les Fâcheux* was written, rehearsed and presented before the king in fifteen days; *L'Impromptu de Versailles* in eight days. On another occasion,

Louis XIV imposed the subject of a comedy on the playwright: the theme of *Les Amants Magnifiques*. Tartuffe was refused permission. Molière, who could not allow his troupe to remain inactive, was obliged to write *Dom Juan* in haste. Necessity also forced him to create plays designed for the actor; he knew immediately to whom he would give such and such a role: if the valet in *La Fleche* limps, it was because Molière wrote this role for Louis Béjart who limped. Harpagon coughs because Molière was ill. A particular play has a dance sequence because La Du Parc was a good dancer; musical interludes were created because Molière could count on the collaboration of Lully. It is amazing to note to what extent Molière took care to give roles to all his actors: at a time, for example, when he had eight actors and four actresses at his disposal, he used to write plays demanding just so many actors and actresses, and without making us feel in any way this limitation.

Molière's unique research is in the field of the comic, which owes much to his observation of men, their follies and their imagination. Does he seek to instruct us? Many have tried, and are still trying, to interpret the ideas of Molière... The theatre for him was not a means but an end, the uninterrupted search for this miraculous contact between the playwright-actor and his audience.

"Ne songeons qu'à nous réjouir
La grande affaire est le plaisir".

"Let us think only of entertaining,
Our greatest concern is pleasure".



Gravure of a performance of *Le Malade Imaginaire* at Versailles.

Molière and the Marathi Stage

N. G. Kalelkar

We have to take many factors into account if we want to make a proper assessment of the translations or adaptations of Molière into other languages. As far as India is concerned, we tend to see Molière, as we do all other non-English foreign writers, through English eyes. Very few, if any, of the translators bothered to find out more about the original writer or about the nature of his contribution to literature. The time or place of the works was never taken into account. As a result, adaptations of Molière's plays failed to project adequately his social satire and translations did not do any justice at all to the style and content of his works.

For instance, *Le Tartuffe* was adapted by H. N. Apte and called *Dhurtavilasita*. P. K. Atre's adaption of the same play bore the title *Buva tethe baya*. Apte's title refers to the exploits of a shrewd fellow, while that of Atre suggests that where there are holy men, we are bound to find women. Apte tried to keep close to the text, but he did not hesitate to condense the long passages, or to alter the text, or occasionally even to expand it, if he found it necessary to do so. Consequently he presented a play which had the same plot as the original, but where the details were greatly modified. Molière's householder is a bourgeois head of the family, ignorant and devout, while Apte's Shirjerao is a well-to-do Maratha. The mother, Madame Pernelle, is a strong character. But Apte failed to appreciate Molière's carefully chosen expressions and tried to make her sharp and bitter rather than frustrated and unhappy. She blames her daughter-in-law (who is very young and beautiful) for not setting a good example to her step-children and for playing too much attention to her own dress and make-up. She says,

Qui conque a son mari veut plaire seulement
Ma bru, n'a pas besoin de tant d'ajustment.

The remark reads almost like a maxim. But Apte has totally missed its point. This is not the only place where such a thing has happened.

Atre presented his *Tartuffe* as a philanderer and fortune-hunter. In Atre's hands the characters became perverted rather than real. The keynote of Molière's presentation was restraint, that of Atre's was to give free rein to every form of expression in order to evoke hilarious laughter. Molière wanted to deal a blow to hypocrisy and to the wrong practices that go on under the name of religion. For Molière that was a serious problem, demanding careful consideration. What Apte and Atre presented in their works was a despicable character rather than a general social evil.

There are many translations and adaptations of Molière in Marathi. But, on the whole, the French comedy writer has not received the attention that Shakespeare, Ibsen or Shaw received here. Molière's masterpiece, *Le Misanthrope*, attracted little notice, probably because it was not found to be humorous enough. In fact, no attempt has been made to distinguish between a farcical play and a social comedy where humour only enters as an accompaniment to certain situations and characters.

Molière requires to be re-read and understood in the social context of his times. Only then will a proper adaptation of his plays in the Indian context be possible. Merely substituting Marathi names and the Marathi language for the original French cannot solve the problem of presenting Molière effectively to our audiences. The other alternative is to work on a very faithful translation of the plays, with copious notes explaining the social, cultural and political context which is so radically different from our own.

The works are listed below in the order of publication. Molière's original work is mentioned in brackets.

1. Shivram Sitaram Wagle: *Satavajirava dhamale*, Bombay, 1885. (Monsieur de Pourceaugnac).
2. Shankar Moro Ranade: *Pramadapramoda athava vanchakabuddhivilasa nataka*, Poona, 1892, (L'Etourdi).
3. Vinayak Dattatrey Bhilavadikar: *Krpana dhananjayrava nataka*, Chikodi, 1899. (L'Avare).
4. Harishchandra Anand Talcherkar: *Ravabahadura parvatya*, Bombay, 1904. (Le Bourgeois gentilhomme).
5. Vitthal Sitaram Gurjar: *Kamalece lagna athava kapatavivaha prahasana*, Bombay, 1905. (L'Amour médecin).
6. Hari Narayan Apte: Tina prahasane (i) *Dhurtavilasita* (ii) *Maruna mutakuna vaidyabova* (iii) *Tabaricha vivaha*, Poona, 1911. (Le Tartuffe, Le Médecin malgré lui, Le Mariage forcé).
7. Sadashiv Narayan Thosar: *Premache ratna ka ratnache prema*, Poona, 1913.
8. Raghunath Dhondo Karve: *Gurubahi*, Bombay, 1937. (Le Tartuffe).
9. Shanai Goybab: *Mogache lagna*, Bombay, 1938. (Le Médecin malgré lui).
10. Pralhad Keshav Atre: *Kavadichumbaka*, Bombay, 1955. (L'Avare).
11. Pralhad Keshav Atre: *Buva tethe baya*, Bombay, 1964. (Le Tartuffe).

Book Reviews

SANGIT ANI KALPAKATA, a translation into Marathi by Shridhar Hari Deshpande of *Music and Imagination* by Aaron Copland, published by the Maharashtra Rajya Sahitya Sanskriti Mandala, Bombay, 1972, Rs. 7.00 (In Marathi).

This book is a translation into Marathi of the work *Music and Imagination* by Aaron Copland, the distinguished American composer. It comprises the Charles Eliot Norton Lectures delivered at Harvard University during the academic year 1951-1952. Aaron Copland has made a deep study of music and devoted a great deal of serious thought to its meaning. We have few books in Marathi which analyse the processes of musical composition and Shridhar Hari Deshpande's work needs to be welcomed by all lovers of music, and by those who are concerned with the flowering and enrichment of our music. Shridhar Hari Deshpande is an ardent music lover. The choice of this particular work for translation into Marathi also reveals his scholarly insight and his understanding of music.

In the first three chapters of this book Aaron Copland seeks to analyse the role of the imaginative mind in composing, performing and listening to music. In the second part of the book he discusses tradition and innovation in recent European music, musical imagination in the Americas and the composer in industrial America. Shridhar Hari Deshpande has not translated the last part of the book since it lists those performances of live music which accompanied Aaron Copland's lectures. Probably Shridhar Hari Deshpande decided to delete this part since it is not relevant to Indian conditions and will not serve a very useful purpose.

In the first chapter Aaron Copland avers that the imaginative mind is the core of all vital music making and music listening. Music is the freest, the most abstract of all the arts and consequently it provides the broadest possible vista for the imagination. In studying music, we encounter various aspects of the imagination. The more important among these include the imagination of the listener and the creator. The first chapter discusses in detail the mental state of the listener. Listening is a talent; and the sense that one can recognise beauty when one comes upon it is its own reward. The ideal listener, even when he is a professional musician, sets aside his own prejudices and preconceptions and surrenders to the power of music. Aaron Copland concentrates on the emotional overtones of music rather than on its technical aspects. The musician should, therefore, be as concerned with the notes he has produced, with the ultimate creation, as with the very process of musical expression.

Aaron Copland discusses two opposing aesthetic theories as to music's significance. One is that the meaning of music, if there is any meaning at all, must be sought in music itself. The other considers music a language of emotions. These two theories are bound together closely. Copland discusses Santayana's phrase concerning music. "The most abstract of arts", Santayana remarks, "serves the dumbest emotions". Copland explains, "On that level, whatever the music may be, we experience basic reactions... and a thousand other psychologically based reflections of our physical life". He makes it clear that refinement in musical taste begins with the ability to distinguish subtle nuances of feeling. "Anyone can tell the difference between a sad piece and a joyous one. The talented listener recognizes not merely the joyous quality of the piece, but also the specific shade of joyousness..." This covers an infinitude of shadings that cannot be named because of music's incommensurability with language. He ends the chapter

by describing gifted listeners as an active force in the musical community, a resource bringing to fruition the immense musical potentialities of our own time.

In the second chapter of the book Aaron Copland states that the way music sounds is nothing more than an auditory concept of what floats in the mind of the composer. His music is a feeling. He clothes it in notes. Feeling is a part of the imagination; so is the composition that it produces. This expression of sounds Copland calls the sonorous image and he believes that the imagination plays a large role here. He discusses a musical creation, its beauty, its significance and other characteristics. He dwells on the mode of interpretation employed to project it and the technical and emotional aspects of the orchestral instruments needed for the purpose.

In the third chapter Copland discusses the close ties which bind musical creation and interpretation. Both demand an imaginative mind and Copland tries to trace their relationship and their interaction, one upon the other.

Copland says he has cogitated on the mysterious nature of creativity. He analyses the artist's condition, his temperament and his creation. He states that for the artist each added work brings an element of self-discovery; self-knowledge is a never-ending search. Because of this, each new work is only part-answer to the question, "Who am I?" and the artist is drawn again and again to newer creations in the quest for fulfilment. And just as an individual creator discovers himself through his creation, so the world at large knows itself through its artists. In the West the composer offers his composition to the musical interpreter and what the creator expects of the interpreter naturally needs to be investigated. The interpreter has to share in the composer's powers of projection. If he fails to do so, he will be like an actor who is ill-suited for his part. In fact, musical interpretation demands of the performer an even wider range than that of the actor, because the musician must play every role in the piece. From the point of view of the interpreter, one might say that divergent readings of the same music are possible. But, on the whole, it has to be meaningful; it has to be convincing, both psychologically and musically. But it must be within the limits of one of the possible ways of interpreting the work and an impressive style needs to be evolved. Copland speaks of the preponderant role of the individual performer. He has to project aspects of a composition which are not too obvious. The real meaning of a composition becomes clearer in this way.

Copland devotes a section in this chapter to describing the interpreter in action. He seeks to analyse the mental state of the performer and ends on the hope that there will be more opportunities for interpreters and composers to meet.

Aaron Copland's views on music offer a new understanding to those interested in music. He has probed into various sectors of the aesthetics of music. He has sought to explain the processes of creation in such an abstract art as music. He does so in a clear and realistic manner. The lectures are discerning in their approach but even so they can be understood by laymen. The book is extremely rewarding reading both for the musician and the listener.

Emotions are the source of a musical composition. An unfortunate aspect of Indian studies is that instead of trying to understand the emotional content of music they concentrate on the notes that are born as a result of that emotion, and more specifically on just twelve notes and their diverse combinations. After reading this work and that too even in translation, we arrive at some understanding of the main aim served by music.

KISHORI AMONKAR

BLACKS IN AMERICAN FILMS: TODAY AND YESTERDAY by Edward Mapp, published by The Scarecrow Press Inc., Metuchen, 1972, \$7.50 (In English).

Edward Mapp's *Blacks in American Films: Today and Yesterday* is a book primarily packed with information. The tools of academe, methodology, and a precise detached tone, harness any sudden swerve into stridency. This, in itself, is unusual when the terrain is volcanic: black experience, and the writer himself committed to its clarification, both in terms of immediate reality and aesthetic satisfaction.

The book, however, is more than documentation. This is not to belittle the nuggets of information almost every page unearths. Did we know, for instance, that the first film in which blacks were featured was entitled *The Wooing and Wedding of a Coon*, and promoted as "a genuine Ethiopian comedy?" This was a silent film made in 1905, and the black actors were actually whites who had donned "black face". You might say, does it matter? Esoteric trivia, at best. But along with this fact comes the interlinked one: in 1914, a black actor appeared for the first time in an American film, inevitably, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. In-between there was a plethora of black "Sambo" or "Rastus" comedies. The author avoids polemical emphasis, and gracefully assumes that the American film industry has never been noted for its liberal/radical stance. But through the interstices of facts, emerges a perspective, sociological in tone, chilling in content.

The image and use of the negro in American films till the nineteen-fifties provides a stethoscope of prevalent white attitudes, ranging from outright contempt to gentle patronage. In the nineteen-sixties, a subtler form of emasculation becomes a cloak for panic. The facts become the configurations which chart this area of hostility, both conscious and sub-conscious.

Each chapter (from 1962 onwards) begins with a catalogue of major events in American life, affecting black experience. No comment is made. Once again, the films in which blacks play bit parts, and by now, major parts, are analysed.

Facts are used adroitly by the author. But to say that is to ignore the core, no, the heart of the book. Several questions are raised—in themselves, interesting. To my mind, the contradictions implicit in the author's rejection of almost all black images in the American film, more so.

To begin with, he quotes Lawrence Reddick (*Journal of Negro Education*—Summer 1944) who enlists nineteen "stereotype" images of the black in American films. All of these, as listed, are demeaning to self-respect: obvious ones such as "the devoted servant", "the mental inferior", "the sexual superman", but also less apparent stereotypes like "the superior athlete", "the natural-born musician". Therefore, while acknowledging the quality of acting which won Hattie McDaniel an Oscar for the best performance in a supporting role in *Gone with the Wind*, the author finds objectionable the role itself—that of "Mammy", "the devoted servant" stereotype. His point of view is understandable. To show blacks at that period of time (i.e. the late nineteen-thirties) either as simpering servants or jazz musicians in a passing interlude, is to deny the veracity of black life as it was lived. On the other hand, were the Mammys and smiling porters and butlers, really mythical or pre-historic figures in the American landscape, at that time? To condone the derision implicit in white attitudes, is impossible. Yet in the nineteen-thirties, American black experience was insufficiently articulate, nor was the facade image disclaimed by those many nameless blacks eeking out some sort of a living. And how subtle were "bit" characterisations, in any colour, in the films of the nineteen-thirties?

By the nineteen-sixties, and the emergence of actors who were not simply good actors, like James Earl Jones, Frank Silvera, Roscoe Lee Browne, but stars the like of Sidney Poitier, Sammy Davis Jr. and Harry Belafonte, it would seem that the black image was changing. But here too, the author applies both the yardstick of "stereotypes" and statistics. Here, the analysis is subtler, and more justified, I think. In most middle-brow films of the nineteen-sixties, major black characters were shown as paragons of virtue, to quote "as stifling and destructive of mature characterisation as the old Rastus stereotype". The author intercuts the comments of both black and white film critics—the latter (I presume, of the liberal variety) who applaud the "goody" roles assigned to, say Sidney Poitier in *Lilies of the Field* (1963). This film, released in India, depicts Poitier's altruistic concern in helping a group of nuns build a chapel. The black critics find unnatural (yet typical of Hollywood) the a-sexual role assigned to him, his unreal martyr-like attitude towards the nuns who are white, which belied black attitudes at the time. Recalling the film, I think of sticky molasses. The black critics are right, but the film itself, whether starring a black or white actor was, with intention, drenched in sentimentality. This hard core of objectivity is missing in the author's jigsaw of facts. Perhaps it is too much to expect.

Again, in analysing *The Comedians* (1967), the author quotes Lindsay Petterson, the white editor of *Anthology of the American Negro in the Theatre*, "It was the first time that a varied character scale of black people were grouped in one setting, as honest-to-goodness, everyday, ordinary, intelligent fallible human beings existing or trying to exist as any other people would under similar circumstances". This is juxtaposed by Bosley Crowther, a black film critic, who writes, "By far the most agitating aspect of the film . . . is the sinister image it presents of a rigid reign of terror in a Caribbean country under a black dictatorship—and this, by a quick association out of our own recent experience, an image of the fearful implication of burgeoning black power". This dichotomy in attitude is more than interesting: it is revelatory of the deep roots in which black pride inheres, to survive. Still, this fitting of the cap of Haiti and Papa Doc is also extreme and not really necessary sensitivity.

Nonetheless, what the author etches so admirably is the camouflage job done on blacks, from the nineteen-sixties onwards. More and more blacks are used in films, some with entirely black casts (i.e. *Porgy and Bess*, *Carmen Jones*). But such films disinfect the festering wound which is black experience in the United States. They provide, at most, a sop to semi-liberal consciences, and, as such, are perhaps more damaging to black self-respect than the obviously derisive images projected in the nineteen-twenties and nineteen-thirties. He is particularly severe, by implication, on black actors such as Sammy Davis Jr. and Sidney Poitier, who, in their personal lives have identified themselves vociferously with the aspirations of their people, and yet are proud of such films as *For Love of Ivy* (1968). I do not think there is anything derogatory in the image projected of the blacks in this film (co-produced by and starring Poitier) but it is a mindless Doris Day type comedy. The antiseptic life portrayed, possibly, does resemble some areas of black life. But when so few films are made, in which blacks are treated as human beings, it is a pity that such meaningless drivel is dished out. This, of course, is my opinion. The author approves of the fact that normal, as opposed to hyper-sexed or implied, love-making between a black couple is not relegated to the cutting room floor, and that Ivy, albeit too naive and winsome, is reasonably real, and not a "stereotype". But he objects to the confused and simplistic motivations in characterisations.

By applying both sociological and aesthetic criteria, the relevance of and interest in this book is widened, but the author emerges as difficult to please. Or do I really mean, that by not belonging to a minority group, and living in a country where, by and large, films cater

to the lowest common factor, I can afford to be objective? A recent Indian film, *Garam Hawa*, focusing on the lives of a family belonging to a minority community, gave me pleasure at many levels, one of them being the reality or lack of Hindi-film "stereotype" in the depiction of character.

It is here that the author's meticulous use of facts and understated reportage achieves its hard objective. It is easy for us to carp at the intelligent blacks' hyper-sensitivity at the image projected of his people, for we remind ourselves, when has the American film industry ever been in the vanguard of changing mores and values? The average image of the white American is equally unreal. But from the nineteen-sixties onwards there has been a small but persistent attempt in films to analyse off-beat but vital human experience in America. The black experience as recorded in novels and plays by such writers as say, James Baldwin and Le Roi Jones, have yet to become the stuff of film. Black director/producers like Herbert Danska and Melvin van Peebles are few. Instead it is easier to produce *Shaft*—Gordon Parks, the reputed black photographer-now-director's answer to James Bond. It was released in Bombay a couple of years ago: a slick tough detective story with a smooth-talking, girl-loving, sharply-dressed but fearless black detective. This is not exactly a satisfying answer to thinking black people in the United States.

NITA PILLAI

VEENALAKSHANAVIMARSHE by Sangitashastrasarasvati Prof. R. Sathyanarayana, published by Sri Varalakshmi Academy of Fine Arts, Mysore, 1972, Rs. 30.00 (calico), Rs. 20.00 (ord.) (*In Kannada*).

Nearly fourteen years ago, a short, apparently insignificant work on Indian music was published by a significant institution. The work was *Veenalakshana* of Parameshvara; the name of the institution was the Oriental Research Institute of Baroda. Musicians and musicologists at that time probably thought to themselves, *parturiunt montes, nascetur ridiculus mus* (the mighty mountain labours but a ridiculous mouse is born!). For, *Veenalakshana* was edited by Sri Pade from a single, moth-eaten manuscript of about a hundred verses, written in poor style and grammar. It was full of lacunae and faults. Even its title was over-ambitious, since it had about five verses, containing the barest and the most elementary information about the *veena*. Its six, short *Ullasa* deal with musical notes, their rendering on the *veena*, a classification of the *raga*, *tala*, finger techniques on the *veena* keyboard, *melakarta* and their derivative (*janya*) *raga*. The work is in Sanskrit: Its author, who lived in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, adopts a very grandiose tone: he describes himself as a *kavishardula*, an expert in several *agama*, *mantra*, *tantra* (including the *dravida tantra*), sculpture, astrology and a great practical exponent of the *kundalini yoga*; and, of course, he says he is a great musicologist!

Veenalakshana was rightly ignored by musicians and musicologists alike. It was a typical work of its kind: loud and empty. It was, at best, a handbook for the tyro. It had, however, one remarkable feature. There was not a trace of enunciation, elucidation or explication of theory or technique. Practical application was its objective; brevity, even at the cost of intelligibility, was its main characteristic. The sum total of its descriptive content: *gamaka* techniques, *suladi tala*, fifteen *melakarta* (which are here, quaintly enough, neither *shuddha sampoorana* nor *raganga*, but *vakra* and/or *varjya*) and some thirty-six *janya raga*. All this information

was taken for granted by both musician and musicologist alike and *Veenalakshana* was, therefore, regarded as yet another wayside anthill on the highway of Indian Music.

Or so we thought, till Prof. Sathyanarayana thought otherwise. The third of the renowned Musical Mysore Quarter—the Mysore Brothers—Sangitashastrasarasvati Prof. Sathyanarayana is one of our foremost musicologists and is the only Indian musicologist who is a Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland (London). Member of the Societe Asiatique (Paris) and Member of the Society for Ethnomusicology (U.S.A.). He is an acknowledged authority on Indian musicology. His areas of special contribution to Indian musicology include interdisciplinary extrapolation, text-critical studies, musical pedagogy, interpretative techniques in historical studies and the popularisation of the contribution of Karnataka to Indian music and dance. His writings are characterised by a creative and critical approach, by depth and dimension.

Prof. Sathyanarayana has been, like some of his colleagues, concerned about a lacuna in the history of Carnatic music. The problem is that modern Carnatic music evolved into its present state in terms of instrumentation, melody structure and rhythm structure from archetypes which crystallised in about the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; yet the written word is utterly silent and the lacuna in history was left unbridged. A deeper examination of *Veenalakshana* revealed to him that it was a veritable gold-mine of clues on the basis of which at least a part of the history of this all too crucial period could be reconstructed. So he put his re-edition and the (Kannada) translation of the work into an appendix and made his introduction the main thesis. In this way a unique work on Indian musicology, *Veenalakshanavimarshe*, was born. The product is a remarkable combination of scholarship and intuitive insight, detail and perspective, versatility and depth. He subjects the original work—line by line and word by word—to a critical exposure and arrives at extraordinary results. He stretches his hand far and near, into the printed or the written or the sung word and surveys nearly all the extant literature on the subject. He delves into the hoary past and draws upon the work of contemporary musicologists, musicians and composers. I have had the work read out to me, translated, explained, commented upon and elucidated with the oral footnotes and personal reactions of the author.

Veenalakshanavimarshe is written in three parts: in the introduction he discusses the author, work and date. There is a critique of the original work in which every word, every nuance of meaning and every intention of the original author is articulated into a substantial thesis. The Appendix contains elaborate and detailed reference material. As against the text and its translation of about thirty two pages, there is the main thesis of about four hundred pages. And every page bears testimony to the massive and monumental scholarship of the author.

Veenalakshanavimarshe has several significant features. It is the first and only work in Indian musicology which is entirely devoted to a critical penetration of a single, prior work. It is the only work in contemporary Indian musicology which subjects the original work to rigorous Higher Textual Criticism. The last sixty pages of the *Vimarshe* represent pioneering work in the enunciation and illustration of the principles of this aspect of Textual Criticism. This is a rare feat even in general Indian Literary Criticism. The *Vimarshe* engenders an adequate, interpretative technique entirely within the framework of the original. The most substantial part of the *Vimarshe* is the *Ragalakshana Kathanollasa*. In the context of evaluating the definition and description of the thirty-six *ragas* of the original work, the learned author has produced a historical survey of unparalleled scope and dimensions. This fascinating study traces every turn that a *raga* took every time, explaining how and why it did so. Some of the *ragas* have changed their names; some, their structure; some, both; some are about fifteen centuries old, while others are still in their infancy and only about two centuries old. All this is not excavation

of fossils: these are the *ragas* which are very much alive today. Nearly all available songs are gathered under each *raga*. Contemporary usage is very often evaluated. The rest of the *Vimarshe* places *shruti*, *svara*, *gamaka*, *tala* and *melakarta* in a detailed perspective in both concept and number.

Another interesting feature of the work deserves mention. Four pink pages at the end of the book compel the interest of the reader. These contain a unique song in notation, the only song ever composed, and set to music on the Indian musical instrument, the divine *Veena*. Prof. Sathyanarayana is himself a musician (he is descended from the great Pallavi Ramalingiah of *deshi-tala-pallavi* fame) and a composer. The words overflow with plural semantic projections and multiple symbolism from the *mantra*, *tantra* and *yoga shastras*.

The contents of *Veenalakshanavimarshe* deserve international notice and recognition. A translation into English and other European languages will be welcomed by students of Indian music and Indian culture.

S. BALACHANDER

CLASSICAL INDIAN DANCING by Mandakranta Bose, published by General Printers & Publishers, Calcutta, 1970, Rs. 25.00 (*In English*).

Painstakingly done, this glossary of technical terms of dance is the result of many years of serious research and hard labour. In a short but pertinent Foreword Prof. T. Burrow draws attention to the treatment of the subject by Bharata and his successors. The present work is mainly devoted to the classification and elucidation of the technical terminology found in about sixteen to nineteen works ranging from Bharata's *Natyashastra* to the *Sahityadarpana* and *Hastaratnavali*. According to the author, "the purpose of this glossary is to assist the student of Indian dancing to understand its technicalities". She rightly points out that, "no mere glossary can present the process, the essence of which is mobility, but it is hoped that the various parts of that process are explained in the following pages" In other words this is in no way a descriptive introduction to the art of dancing but an explanation of its technique. In order to make this explanation as full as possible the meaning of class names and basic concepts is given at the beginning. The method adopted is not one of a continuous alphabetical arrangement. The terms have been arranged under class headings, each class being arranged alphabetically.

After this lucidly stated objective, the author goes on to analyse, in the first place, the main terms used in the context of dancing, such as *Nrta*, *Nrtya*, *Marga*, *Desi*, *Tandaya* and *Lasya* and then to analyse terms referring to movements related to specific parts of the body under the broad classification of *Angas*, *Upangas* and *Pratyangas*. This is followed by a consideration of the basic units of movements, such as the *charis*, *mandala*, *sthana*, *gati* and *rechaka*. Finally a chapter each is devoted to *Karana* and *Angahara*.

According to the author, the tradition of Bharata was followed by the authors of all other treatises on dance except *Nartananirnaya* and *Sangitadarpana*. These two she treats separately.

While there exists a rich body of critical literature on the terminology of music, comparatively little attention has been devoted to such terminology in dance. Nevertheless, both translators and scholars have done considerable work in the field. Dr. V. Raghavan's work is of great importance; and also that of K. M. Verma. The present reviewer has devoted a chapter in her work *Classical Indian Dancing in Literature and the Arts* to this subject. Mandakranta Bose's present study supplements the earlier efforts through a very well-defined system of cross-referencing and collating. While her predecessors have attempted an interpretation of the terms and linked them with the actual performance, she restricts herself to a theoretical consideration of these terms and their definitions in treatises, spread over a period of sixteen centuries.

She draws no general conclusions from the varying definitions which occur in these treatises at different historical moments. In spite of this conscious effort to refrain from a descriptive study or a critical evaluation, a careful perusal of this work reveals that the writers of the treatises followed Bharata in the main, but there were, at the same time, many innovations and deviations in this field. Indeed a comparison of the chapters devoted to movement in the *Natyashastra* and the seventh chapter of the *Sangitaratnakara* clearly proves that the concept of the *Desi anga, Karana* had begun to assume importance in the thirteenth century. Mandakranta Bose enumerates terms which do not even occur in the pre-Sarangadeva period. It will be clear from this and from the analyses of the terms used in the *Sangitadamodara* and *Nartananirnaya* that many new schools had begun to evolve. The tradition was not just a static repetition: it was changing continuously. It was in a process of modification even while it adhered to certain basic fundamentals. One wishes that Mandakranta Bose had also taken into consideration the *Adibharatam*, the *Balaramabharatam* and, of course, the *Sangitaraja*. A clearer picture of historical development and of regional variants would have emerged as a result.

In the chapters relating to *Karana* and *Angahara*, she has rightly drawn attention to the fact that these are cadences of movement and not static poses as understood by some: however, the descriptions of these movements in her work (as quite often in the original Sanskrit works) remain no more than a stringing together of many technical phrases which are likely to be incomprehensible to most dancers interested in recreating these sequences. Although each term and its source is fairly accurately annotated, its value is limited particularly in the absence of a description of the path of movement which each limb follows. The illustrations alas are only suggestive; they are not accurate. One suspects that the author's vision is limited to the text, and does not extend to actual performance. The establishment of a co-relation between codifying and actual performance is an essential pre-requisite of the dance-scholar's intellectual and artistic equipment. Mandakranta Bose appears to be rather handicapped in this particular field. The author of the *Sangitopanishata Sarodhara* had said, "Without practical experience the theorist cannot have complete knowledge of dancing". The present author has quoted this invaluable statement. The same advice can be given to her and particularly if she wants to explore the field further.

In spite of this major limitation, the author deserves all praise for a clearly presented and systematic piece of research which, as accurate documentation, will be of great help to future scholars. One doubts, however, if it will assist the student of dancing to understand the technicalities of this art form.

KAPILA VATSYAYAN

SANGEET : PURVA AUR PASHCHIM, A Hindi translation by Dr. Sanyukta of the German original by Dr. H. S. Koelreutter, Akshar Prakashan, Delhi, 1971, Rs. 8.00 (*In Hindi*).

The title might suggest that this work is a comparative study of the Eastern and Western styles of music. Actually it is a collection of independent articles which deal mainly with the evolution and styles of Western music. At the same time there are certain pertinent observations on the subject of Indian music which reveal an insight into its social and aesthetic content.

Of the eleven essays in this book, three are devoted to an introduction to Indian music. It is compared with the Western style of music. The author, Dr. Koelreutter, who himself is a flautist, composer and conductor, was formerly Director of Max Mueller Bhavan, Delhi. He has been associated with a number of cultural institutions in Asia. He has, therefore, a first-hand knowledge of the prevailing styles of Asian music, and specially Indian music. In this book he speculates on the possibility of a merger of the two styles, Indian and Western. He believes that due to rapid modernisation Indian society has adopted certain Western values in its life style, its political set-up and in some of its art forms. New music in India is bound to evolve on similar lines. It will not continue to exist in the state in which it remains today. Dr. Koelreutter avers that all arts, including music, are dependent to a large extent on social and economic conditions and will evolve that way.

Describing his own mystical experience of the unity of sound and silence in the music of India, Dr. Koelreutter makes the statement that the essence of all music is silence. That silence, he says, is not non-existence of sound, nor the end of sound production; it is not even a relative concept but a silence which is positive and completely unrelated. It contains the possibilities of creation and is full of infinite power. Dr. Koelreutter asserts that Indian music is an art in which sound and silence supplement each other to form one whole. He believes that ours is a rare musical culture and he writes on this subject not as a foreigner would, but as an individual who has taken pains to understand the basis of our music.

He compares the Eastern and Western styles in one chapter of the book. He says that Western music is entirely composed music with exactly measured time and tempo which can be controlled by a metronome. But Indian music (and here he obviously has in mind presentday North Indian classical music, and particularly the *khayal*) is extempore, improvised and develops by itself. It is in a state of continuous creation while Western music is definite and harmoniously interpreted for posterity. He believes that we are entering an era when the energies and activities of both the East and the West will take a decisive turn.

The book contains information on various aspects of Western music. It describes, in brief, its evolution and some of the sociological influences which went into its making. Dr. Koelreutter's conclusions about Indian music are formed on the basis of intelligent listening. One may not agree with all his views, but his sincere approach to all musical problems and his anxiety to make music a unifying force drawing diverse cultures towards each other deserves our appreciation.

In translating the work into Hindi from the original German, Dr. Sanyukta has taken care to retain a high standard and a chaste diction. His Hindi renderings of the technical terms

are expressive and to the point. There is hardly a book of this type in Hindi and it will certainly be of use to those students who are interested in a comparative study of the Eastern and Western styles of music.

NINU MAZUMDAR

AN INTRODUCTION TO INDIAN MUSIC by B. Chaitanya Deva, published by Publications Division, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, New Delhi, 1973, Rs. 10.00 (*In English*).

There are several books, and of a varied kind, in the English language on the subject of Indian music. Some are written mainly from a scholastic angle; they bristle with technicalities that are of interest only to the specialists. Some seek to restrict their scope either to Hindustani or Carnatic music. Some have chosen only a particular branch of Indian music such as dance, instruments, folk songs, or aesthetics as their main theme. A few have approached the subject in its entirety and with an eye to the general reader. Because of their restricted scope, they have not been able to go into the depth and variety of the subject. There was, therefore, a genuine need for a book which could combine the requirements of the two classes—the initiated and the uninitiated—and present the same in a manner which was neither too technical nor too casual. The book under review attempts to meet that need.

To introduce Indian music, both Hindustani and Carnatic, in an integrated and balanced manner, and that, too, in a slender volume is a challenging task. India has a rich heritage of music, both vocal and instrumental, classical and folk. It abounds in variety. To weave all the strands together into a main stream and yet take note of the tributaries demands a deep understanding and a judicious approach. The author has made a commendable effort to meet this challenge.

The book, as the author explains in his preface, "is not a learned tome, neither is it a bedside book, much less a tourist guide. A certain amount of earnestness and interest are expected of the reader. Also, the book is intended both for Indian and foreign friends. It may even interest a specialist because of its analytical methods."

About the two systems of Indian music and their treatment, the author adds, "The historical process of cultural development has given us two systems of sophisticated music: the North Indian (Hindustani) and the South Indian (Karnatak). Whether these two resulted from the bifurcation of a more ancient single 'Indian' music or are the consequences of fusion of regional styles is a question that need not be discussed here. But both are 'Indian', however, one may define that word; they have a high degree of commonness, though quite clearly distinctive also. The present book treats both together though not necessarily as 'one' music".

Broadly speaking, the book, which has ten chapters, has been divided into two clear-cut parts: (1) the grammar of music and (2) its historical and sociological aspects. The first is a description of the structure of Indian music; the second gives the socio-historical background and aesthetics of this art. The first five chapters are devoted to the introduction and grammar of Indian music. These discuss briefly the basic principles of our music, both Hindustani and Carnatic. The approach, as the author points out in the preface, is always from the known to the unknown. "The music of India is essentially melodic". Therefore, he starts the discussion

of the grammar of Indian music with melody or *raga* which he calls the musical language, the notes (*swaras*), being its alphabet. The melodic structure is built on certain well-defined principles such as the number of notes in the ascending and descending order, the nature of notes—*shuddha* or *vikrita*, the emphasis on notes, in the degree of their importance, *vadi-samvadi* and the catchy combination of phrases which identifies the personality of a *raga*. Then, there are the graces like *meend*, *gamakas* and *alankaras* which add colour and beauty to this structure. All this has been explained at length in the chapter devoted to melody.

The tone, *nada* is divided into quarter-tones, *shrutis* which, in turn, give birth to the twelve notes (*shuddha* and *vikrita*). The grouping of these twelve notes is called *saptaka* (octave) and from this octave are derived the *melas* which ultimately produce the *ragas* (melodic patterns). This process of evolution from *shrutis* to *mela* has also been explained lucidly in the first portion of the book.

Swara and *tala* are the two main planks on which the super-structure of Indian music is based. The construction of the structure, therefore, would not be complete without a thorough discussion of the *tala* and its components. The author, accordingly, gives adequate attention to this aspect of Indian music in the first part of the book. He discusses at length the time division, rhythm, tempo and all the elements that go to make our music rhythmic and flowing. Important *talas*, both of the north and the south, have been explained.

In the concluding part of the first section the author discusses the various forms and styles of singing prevalent both in the North and in the South. He says, "Indian music has recognised two broad categories of musical forms: the open and the closed, roughly equivalent to and reminiscent of the ancient *anibaddha* and *nibaddha*". The word *anibaddha* means 'not bound'. That is, the music is not set within the limitations of a frame-work like a song. It has no rhythmic structure or defined sectional arrangements. The *nibaddha*, on the other hand, means 'bound' or 'set within a frame'. A song or an instrumental piece with definite parts, set to a *tala* or having a defined beginning and end is a *nibaddha* form. He describes at length the nature and content of the leading forms of vocal music such as the *dhrupad*, *khayal*, *thumri*, *tarana* of the North as well as the *varnam*, *kriti*, *padam*, *javali*, *tillana* and *pallavi* of the South.

The second part of the book deals with musical instruments, traditional styles of singing, the aesthetics, the historical background of music and the biographies of the great musicians of this country. He classifies all the musical instruments of India, both of the North and of the South, into four broad divisions: stringed instruments, such as the *sitar*, *sarod*, *veena* and bow instruments like the *sarangi*, and the violin, wind instruments like the flute, *shehnai* and *nagaswaram* and percussion instruments like the *mridangam*, *tabla* and *ghatam*.

India's rich heritage of folk and traditional songs is well-known. It is as rich as it is varied. The author also takes into account these aspects of Indian music. His discussion sheds light on some of the leading styles of folk and traditional music, and particularly because he quotes extensively from the words in these songs.

From times immemorial, *ragas*, and in particular those in Hindustani music, have been sung at a specified time of the day or night. Why is it so? Is there any scientific or psychological reason for this? They say that each note has its own characteristic *rasa*. Their combination and permutation produce the desired mood for the listener. The author, in the chapter *Mind and Music*, discusses this factor and various other aspects of the problem. He explains at length the basic principles governing the time theory of the *ragas* and our fundamental musical concepts.

Our music today is not the same as it was centuries ago. Different factors have influenced the course of its evolution. We cannot reconcile modern music with our ancient musical traditions unless we peep into the historical past and acquaint ourselves with the various cross-currents that shaped its course. The book devotes adequate attention to this subject in *Then and Now*.

The concluding part of the book deals with the lives and achievements of some of the greatest celebrities in the field of Indian music, those who have distinguished themselves either as composers or as performers or as musicologists. The author starts with Jaidev and goes on to discuss Swami Haridas, Tansen, Sadarang, bringing the list down to Bhatkhande and Vishnu Digambar Paluskar. Discussing the music of the South, he begins with Purandaradasa, Kshetreyya and the celebrated trinity—Shama Sastry, Thyagaraja and Muthuswamy Dikshitar—and goes on to that versatile genius, Swati Tirunal. Rabindranath Tagore also find his due share in this discussion.

Charts and tables, appended at appropriate places, make the technical terms more intelligible, particularly to the uninitiated. The inclusion of a short bibliography as well as a discography towards the end of the book adds to the usefulness of the work. The incorporation of a few selected photographs of eminent musicians, both instrumentalists and vocalists, has added to the illustrative value of the work.

The printing, the general get-up and the binding are also good.

In short, Dr. Chaitanya Dev has, through this book, rendered a valuable service to the cause of Indian music. The only suggestion that I would venture to make is that the treatment of the subject would have become more scientific and rational if he had started with the alphabet—*shruti* and *swara*—and then gone on to deal with the musical language, the *raga*.

SAMAR BAHADUR SINGH

Record Reviews

MOZART: The four Horn Concertos, Concert Rondo, K. 371 and Fragment of Concerto, K. 494A. Barry Tuckwell (Horn) and Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields conducted by Neville Marriner.
HMV ASD 2780. (Stereo.)

GEROG SOLTI Conducts
HMV SPA 127. (Stereo.)

HMV have brought together on one L.P. the four horn Concertos of Mozart as well as the Concert Rondo in E flat minor K 371 and the Fragment of Concerto in E Major, K 494A, all played by that superb horn player Barry Tuckwell.

All these works were written for Ignaz Leutgeb, a fine horn player, who was a friend of Mozart's and whom Mozart teased mercilessly. Leutgeb combined his music with running a cheese shop. It is difficult to say if Mozart did not treat these works as a joke because he wrote parts of them while playing practical pranks on Leutgeb, and writing the music as fast as he could. One of the pieces is written using all kinds of coloured ink; others contain rude remarks addressed to Leutgeb, and scrawled all over with amusing mock directions. But Mozart is Mozart, and we get here there and everywhere flashes of his spontaneous invention and poetic genius as in the *Rondo* of the Concerto in E flat Major, K 417. Barry Tuckwell seems to enjoy himself in this mood of brilliant conviviality and elegant leg-pulling.

On the second record Georg Solti conducts an assortment of works in part or full ranging from Gluck to Mahler. Four orchestras are featured. Altogether a disc that is not really fair either to the conductor or the great orchestras he conducts. But through it all we can see the sure touch of the master and the quality of the fine ensembles he directs.

N. M.

TULSI RAMAYANA *Shriramcharitmanas Ayodhya Kanda* (Parts 1 and 2).
HMV EASD 1505, 1506. (Stereo.)

Following the two discs of excerpts from the *Bal Kanda* of *Shriramcharitmanas* by Tulsidas, which were reviewed in this journal (June 1973), we now have two more in the sequence, comprising excerpts from the *Ayodhya Kanda* of the great epic. Listening to these, one is immediately struck by the contrast between the musical treatment of the two parts. Whereas in the *Bal Kanda*, the director Murli Manohar Swarup had exclusively used the traditional recitative form, he now introduces different compositions and styles to relate the succeeding episodes from Tulsidas' epic. Many of these compositions are well-conceived. The *Bal Kanda* discs are drab and monotonous and virtually devoid of music. Murli Manohar Swarup perhaps realised this, and boldly altered his approach to suit the presentation of the *Ayodhya Kanda* verses. He has achieved a large measure of success in making the records under review lively and musically interesting.

Performing Arts Circle

In order to ensure that serious students and lovers of the performing arts are kept in close touch with the activities of the National Centre for the Performing Arts, a Performing Arts Circle has been formed. The Circle is an informal association of practitioners, teachers, students and lovers of the performing arts who will have whatever facilities the Centre is able to offer at this stage.

Members of the Performing Arts Circle will at present be offered the following facilities :

- (1) Access to the Music Library. The Library has facilities for listening to discs and tapes. Scores for Western music will also be available for consultation.
- (2) Admission to invitation performances of music, dance, drama at the National Centre's Recording Auditorium and elsewhere. Where space is limited, seats will be made available on a first-come-first-served basis.
- (3) Free copy of the National Centre's quarterly journal which will contain articles written by distinguished authorities in the fields of music, dance, drama and films and will also outline the programme of the next quarter and review the programme of the previous quarter.
- (4) For all performances by eminent artistes, about 12 per annum, facilities for purchase of tickets before the Box Office opens to the public and/or at concessional rates.

MEMBERSHIP FEE

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| Individual Membership .. | Rs. 100 per annum per individual; Rs. 150 per annum for husband and wife. |
| Professional/Student Membership .. | Rs. 25 per annum per individual (For practitioners, teachers and professional students of the performing arts). |

Applications for membership may be obtained either from Bombay House (4th Floor), Fort, Bombay 400 023 or from 89, Bhulabhai Desai Road, Bombay 400 036.

The melodic themes are based on classical *ragas*; sometimes blends of two or more are carefully chosen to heighten the varying moods in the story. Swarup has used several morning melodies like *Jaunpuri* and *Todi*, evening *ragas* like *Puriya-dhanashri*, and also those generally associated with light-classical singing like *Desh* or *Shivaranjani*. He has set them in *talas* like *teentala*, *keharva* and *rupak*; he has varied the tempo in tune with the different situations. An interesting feature of the music is that the different compositions are strung together skilfully through the judicious intervention of the traditional mode of recitation. This is indeed effectively done, creating a sense of wholeness. One does not get the feeling that this is a disjointed patchwork of songs. Mention must also be made of the very good instrumental accompaniment and the imaginative use of the flute and the *sarod*.

Mukesh is the principal artist; he is supported by six well-known male and female singers. Much of the success of the record is due to Mukesh's excellent intonation, the way he speaks the lines. But the choral support is rather weak and one cannot but help feeling that the voices could have been much more effectively used.

PRAFULLA DAHANUKAR